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The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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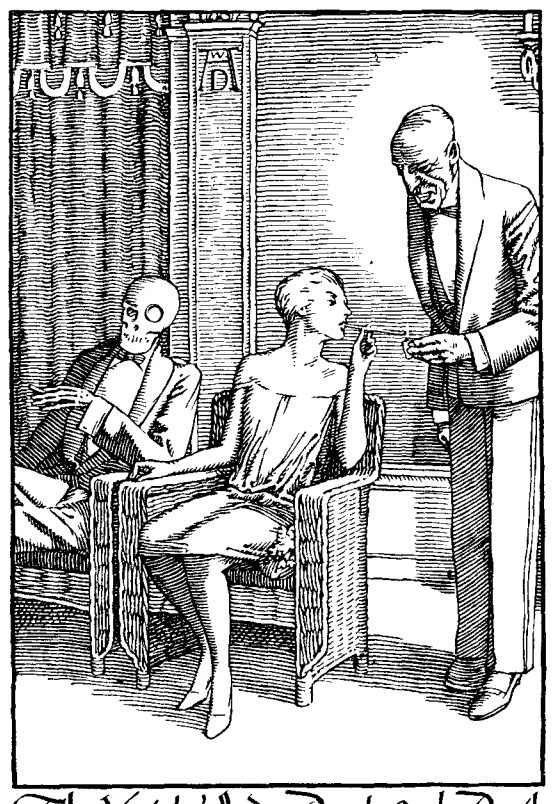

The Knight's Lady, Death, & the Devil

Calmly she turns, amusingly attired,
Child of the age, careless and bored and brave,
Nor cares to note by whom her youth is squired
Nor, at her elbow, truly view her slave.

Skeptics Wanted

WE need a third-party movement in the realm of ideas—the Skeptics. Observers at the cross-roads of thought—journalists, preachers, scholars, editors—know how sharply the currents of recent opinion contradict each other. Conservative and radical in literature no longer speak the same language. To many a cultivated gentleman, Mr. Mencken and his strong-arm men seem a pack of wolves harrying the Graces through the underbrush. Words fail to describe what placid lovers of Charles Lamb or Henry Longfellow seem to the new sophisticates. The young men out of Paris, the hard-boiled intelligentsia, and all those who would rather be accused of a crime than a sentiment, inspire the American bourgeois with an indignant horror which would be more freely expressed if he were more articulate. As for the progressive writer who finds that he can sell only stereotyped fiction polished to magazine standards, he would like to lead New York against the Middle West and die spitting a thousand Babbitts on his pen in the inevitable defeat of originality by convention.

The result of all this acrimony is a wide unfairness in criticism. The radicals have been too busy destroying reputations to look to their own standards of judgment. We used to sigh when the hero's feet proved to be of clay, but now it is a signal for rejoicing. Hurrah! Push him over! Bury the mid-Victorians (except Melville who wrote of incest), bury the late Victorians (except Butler who was one of us), bury the 'nineties with Kipling at the bottom of the heap (but not Shaw who will wriggle and kick), bury Wells, Bennett, and Galsworthy, and get the firing squad ready for Hardy, Sinclair Lewis, Masefield, and Dreiser. No one who believes in a coherent universe, an intelligible moral system, in humor or in sentiment in a world so obviously devoid of both in its makings, shall keep a reputation if the new sophisticates can destroy it.

As for the conservatives, their weapons are old-fashioned but deadly. Of any book that differs from their accepted code of art and manners they have only to say, "unhealthy," "smart," or "dirty," and refuse to buy. They can boycott novelty with the greatest ease, for what the conservatives will not read, cannot be extensively published. In art and manners they are always a majority. Magazines are creatures of advertisement and their life blood is their circulation ratio. (We offer you McCall Street—Ten thousand readers per dollar—A national distribution, etc., etc.) Books are sold by word of mouth chiefly. Tory opinions in literature exercise an influence upon distribution out of all proportion to their validity as criticism.

* * *

Do we need more radicals? We did, but not now. Do we need more conservatives? We may soon, but certainly not yet. What is urgently required is a society of honest and intelligent skeptics. Skeptics who can see a benefit in the current idol smashing, but doubt whether a negative philosophy will be much good to the next generation. Skeptics who can sympathize with the attempt to tell a story backward, yet doubt the final triumph of Joyce over Dostoievsky. Skeptics who wonder whether it is wise to bury the Victorians too deeply, since much spade work will be necessary, in order to dig them up again. (It took half a century to put the Elizabethans back again where they belonged). And also skeptics who will laugh good-humoredly at the impassioned appeals of conservatives to put an end to all change. Men and women of sufficient perspicacity to know that what every clamorous critic wants is to have his own taste confirmed as right.

But the big job for the Skeptics is to be skeptical of dogmatists. To know that not even the new psychology is going to put all the old truths in the discard. To still read Plato while considering Adler and Jung. To wonder whether the political realists are any more right or wrong than the Emersonian idealists. To note that critics talk about Truth and Reality in exactly the same terms as were used for Romance in the 'nineties. To be suspicious of indignant old gentlemen who say that society is rotting and literature dead. To be skeptical of respectable females who complain that sex is a disease. To be equally skeptical of brash young women who think that all reticent books are abnormal. To wonder, with some chuckling, whether conservatives or radicals have ever read a history of morals, of literature, or of philosophy, or of opinion, with an open mind and a humble heart.

And can a skeptic only be skeptical? Has he no opinions of his own? Rich ones, deep ones, perhaps, but in a time of acrimonious diversity the first effect of his philosophy will be skepticism, for he must be skeptical of most current opinions if he is to stand by his own.

"Some people have wondered," says the *Manchester Guardian*, "why Dr. Feuchtwanger, who is so essentially a modern, should have gone to earlier periods for the subjects of his two distinguished novels, 'Jew Süss' and the one just published, 'The Ugly Duchess.' He has now written a play, 'The Oil Islands,' which has the same theme as 'The Ugly Duchess,' but has a modern American setting. That was produced in Hamburg recently, and is to be produced in Berlin in January. Another new play, 'Calcutta, May 4,' which deals with an important day in the life of Warren Hastings, has also been produced lately."

Europe's Cultural Product

By MAXIM GORKI

NOTHING can be conceived that is worse than reality but it is possible to invent something better.

It is quite undeniable that the history of culture is, all things considered, nothing but a history of the ways by which men have overcome reality through various inventions, the general purpose of which is to make life more comfortable, more pleasant, more a thing of wisdom. This was known even to the cavemen and it is amazing that in the twentieth century after Christ not everybody knows how great is the power of a man's imagination and how infinite its importance to culture.

Worms, fishes, and some of the quadrupeds also share this ignorance. They entirely lack the capacity for dreams and inventions, and hence for the creation of better conditions of life for themselves. They are incapable of creating even such a purely mechanical abomination as, for instance, a four-years' slaughter, organized by the most cultured nations of Europe and now threatening to bring ruin and destruction to the latter.

But, as we know, a man is wise even in his crime. It is exactly this capacity of his that afforded him the possibilities of becoming the sovereign on earth, the exploiter of all live and "dead" matter. I think, however, that if man had been merely wise, he would hardly have gone much further than a bee, a beaver, or an ant.

It is the power of imagination that has carried man far beyond all wise insects and animals. Imagination, incessantly irritating his mind and directing it, has taught man to create "air castles," and it has been proved that those castles are much harder to bring down than many an ancient building or town, lately crushed to dust by the shells of big guns;—instruments that are, so we are assured, very cleverly constructed, but nevertheless quite unable

This Week

Drawing. By *W. A. Dwiggins.*
Quatrain. By *William Rose Benét.*
"Miscellany of American Poetry." Reviewed by *O. W. Firkins.*
"Epoch: The Life of Steele Mac-Kaye." Reviewed by *Elwyn A. Barron.*
"The Companionate Marriage." Reviewed by *Bernard De Voto.*
"Out of the Sea." Reviewed by *Oliver M. Sayler.*
"Julius Caesar and the Grandeur That Was Rome." Reviewed by *Tenney Frank.*
"Rebellion." Reviewed by *Allan Nevins.*
"Kitty." Reviewed by *Gladys Graham.*
"My Life in Advertising." Reviewed by *Earnest Elmo Calkins.*

Next Week, or Later

The Charwoman Speaks. By *Louise Anderson Macdonald.*

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to kill imagination, although they are very efficient in killing man, who is a temporary incarnation of imagination, striving obstinately to carry it into life.

The domain where imagination has been, and is being incarnated with particular brilliancy is the domain of art, and especially literature, the art of the word. If it is necessary to speak of the aim of literature, I should say that, in my opinion, it lies in showing to the world that man, both in his sins and in his qualities, is immeasurably more complicated than he appears at first glance to be.

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At the present time we are living in a world, painfully oppressed and agitated by the tragedy of events, in a sickly world which has gone and is still going through unheard-of horrors, is weary of them, exhausted by them to the limit. I believe it would be very wholesome now to give a free hand to imagination, bring the "dream" back again to life, start the restoration of the old "air-castles" and the building of new ones. I seriously mean what I say when I speak of the marvelous stability of these "buildings of sand," of the tested and perfectly clear necessity that clamors for their erection. And I am positive that the time will soon come when the artists of Europe will again begin raising their voices and finding new words to speak of philanthropy, humanism, brotherhood of nations, of the mysterious complexity of a man's soul, of the imperative need to fix all one's attention on man and respect him, of our solitude in the universe, of the great joys and inexhaustible sorrows of love, of the cursed riddles of life, of the heroic labor of the mind—of all that widens and deepens a man's spirit, making him rise above reality. Reality is to man like a rebellious dog, for the bad training of which he is himself to blame.

It is through those "dreams" that the animals called people have been humanized and there is no aim approaching the great purpose of art—to humanize people.

I do not forget, of course, that men of great perseverance such as Romain Rolland and those like him in spirit, have never for a moment interrupted their sacred task of humanizing a flock of semi-phantoms, semi-animals, and that the deafening thunder of guns did not succeed in stilling their noble voices for long. But it is known that an unscrupulous quack is made contented and happy by the sicknesses of his ignorant patients; it is known that when a man dies, the undertaker is the winner.

The man of the present day is particularly in need of a vigorous spirit, of the accumulation of all his strength, for it is necessary that he should conquer the mad bustle of the days; this bustle, in spite of its deafening rumble, becomes more and more deadly monotonous and dull. Man must imperatively free himself from the terror of reality and in this, literature could easily assist him.

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Meanwhile,—life is a song which, although not always in tune, is sung in chorus by the whole human world. This song is: the prayer for happiness. The whole earth is wrapped up in its echo, in the fierce melody of creative power and labor. Although appearance may be against me, I assert that the number of happy people is augmenting incessantly and that the number of people thirsting for happiness is also growing with marvelous rapidity. An organic revulsion against dirt and poverty arises among all people. They cease to pride themselves on being unexacting and poor. The asceticism, inflicted upon them by the church, begins to disappear; a disgust is born in them for every type of suffering; they grow conscious of the necessity and joys of science—man wants happiness. And, because happiness and joy, worthy of man, are impossible outside culture, it follows that the thirst for happiness is a thirst for culture. In the chorus praying for happiness, the voices of poets, the artists of the word, ring out with particular clearness and persuasiveness. And in our days, at this present moment, one waits and hopes that those voices will call out with particular vigor, stimulating still more keenly the desire for happiness which is, in its essence, the desire for a truly human life.

Man does not come to earth in order to listen to dismal songs and gloomy tales of sins, crimes, and the misfortunes of life, and if any one experiences an absolute need of supplying a man's mind with grievances, I should advise him to do so in doses not greater than would excite and augment the appetite for life, as mustard does, for instance.

I start out from an unshakable conviction, born from the experience of my whole life, that reality is a product of will and reason and, in its best manifestations, a product of man's "dream," the result of his imagination realized. Nobody except people themselves are to blame for that which oppresses and tortures them. And I always think it strange and, at times, funny to see people tremble with fear before something which is the work of their own hands. A splendid antidote against fear is laughter. The most healthy people from a spiritual point of view are the English, and I think that, among other things, they owe this spiritual health to the sense of humor, so highly developed among them. Of course, English humor is somewhat exceptional, irrational; one can covet but one cannot acquire or imitate it.

People could easily cure themselves from the poisoning through fear which is killing them, were they but to understand the vital power of healthy laughter. In spite of the abundance of sorrow prevalent in our day, our life is sufficiently rich in manifestations deserving mockery. What is more, there is many a grief which provokes nothing but laughter. This is well known to Bernard Shaw and many other English writers.

I am not speaking of the "whip of satire," i.e., not exclusively of it, for it seems to me that man has quite enough of scourges and scorpions to satisfy him. One must laugh lovingly, as one laughs over children when they cry, terrified at what they have themselves committed. The art of the word, knowing how to rise above reality, should know, too, how to laugh over the latter. This is very wholesome for one.

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I hope that all that has been said above will help the reader better to understand my attitude towards Russian literature. In the nineteenth century that literature was mostly didactic, instructive, and preaching. It was inspired and stimulated by social questions; it threw a stern and vivid light on the hardships of the Russian peasant; it appealed for help to the latter, smothering as he was in darkness and in the primitive conditions of hard labor, illiterate, deeply uncultured, superstitious as a savage. And the peasant—that means 85 per cent of the population in Russia! He was actually perishing in poverty and blindness of reason, oppressed by a marvelously inefficient government. Autocracy was a skin-disease of Russia, but that disease had spread so widely that it had already succeeded in destroying the psychical organism of the nation. The point of view of this autocratic government found its cynical expression in the words of one of the most powerful monarchists, the Head of the Synod, K. Pobedonoszeff: "The more illiterate the people, the easier it is to govern them."

But, in spite of its political inefficiency, autocracy well understood that at the bottom of all revolutionary ideas and designs lay humanism. The government was adverse to literature and fought it continually. There is hardly a writer in Russia who has not had to go through banishment to Siberia, prison, and, in some cases, even to the galleys. Russian literature was humanitarian and therefore revolutionary. I think that no other literature in Europe has poured so much of its strength into the people and attempted with such clumsy consistency to revolutionize the "intelligentsia," mercilessly imbuing it with a critical point of view of reality.

The influence of the passive anarchism of Tolstoy, the greatest Russian artist after Pushkine, was not less revolutionary than the work of any other political writer among the revolutionaries, although Tolstoy asserted his denial of the importance of politics and the necessity of revolution.

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A conservative as regards politics, the Slavophile Dostoievsky was a still greater anarchist than Tolstoy, as is well seen from his books of genius. He is an anarchist-individualist. His most concise work, "The Memoirs from Underground," a tale which contains the fundamental ideas of all his later books, offers one the type of an individualist to whom the whole world is foreign and hostile. Dostoievsky is the most ruthless analyst of life and the founder of that spiritual maximalism which, as some Russian philosophers assert, later took the shape of "bolshevism" in politics. He was cruelly injured by life and revenged himself mercilessly on it for all the "degraded and abased," at the head of which he saw himself. He taught: "Man, humble your pride! Be enduring!" and was himself the most intolerant and the least enduring of Russian writers—thereby supplying one more proof of the contradictory elements and complexity of man's nature. His dismal and cruel art inoculated Russian literature with psychological sadism, as well as a striving for microscropical analysis of the "soul," and thus weakened the thirst for life.

In Russia there was and is almost no writer who has not served more or less the purposes of revolution by means of an intensely cruel criticism of reality.

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One can say that apart from Alexander Pushkine, the greatest genius of Russia in the unlimited scope of his talent, and the group of his poetical friends, apart from the poets Lermontov and Tiutchev, the poet and dramatist Count A. K. Tolstoy, the novelist Goncharoff, the wonderful expert in the Russian language, Lieskoff, and perhaps two or three other writers, Russia had no self-sufficient art which did not submit to the intrusive demands of politics and sociology. Russia did not know art in the shape of a mysterious game or genius, which can mould anything that its heart may desire out of the facts offered to it by reality, surrendering to the various manifestations of life, merely as the sculptor surrenders to the shapeless block of clay or stone. Russian literature played a great, subordinate political part, being compelled by the conditions of life of its people to represent the ghastly picture of Russian life in order to provoke the needed revulsion for it.

The splendid novelist Ivan Turgeniev also served this purpose; Anton Chekov in his tales, "The Peasant," "In a Summer Resort," "In the Ravine," "My Life," "Sotzki," and others, gave up a lot of his strength and energy to it. The cause of the revolution was strongly supported by Leonide Andreiev, a marvelously gifted author who died a premature death. As to Vladimir Korolenko, he devoted all his heroic life to the task of criticizing Russian life. This task was continued by the writers of the present day: the perfect stylist, the stern and severe Ivan Bunine, whose tale, "The Country," is perhaps the most dismal and truthful picture of Russian peasants; Alexander Kuprin, author of the story, "The Duel," who was the first to throw a merciless light on the life of Russian military classes.

The author of this article, too, has worked in the direction of criticism of Russian reality, but in one way, I think, differing from the others. That is, by striving to invoke in the reader a more active attitude towards reality. He saw and continues to see "the wisdom of life in the mad recklessness of the brave," and has many a time pointed out the sharp, almost racial difference between the intelligentsia, a product of the Europeanized town, and the "people," the peasants, the country.

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In the first years of the twentieth century appeared a group of poets, "symbolists," who very rapidly acquired a prominent place and of which the greatest were K. Balmont, Valeri Briussov, Andrei Bieli. But some time before they arrived, symbolism had already been preached by the most original Russian poetess, Zinaida Gippius, the great, erudite Dmitri Mereshkovski, and Feodor Sollogub. Those three people can be considered as the precursors of the new current in Russian literature, which now abandoned the ideas of "narodnichestvo"* (political didactics), strove to keep Russian literature away from the solution of social questions, and direct it to the study of questions of personal life. In this one could clearly perceive the influence of the religious philosophy of Dostoievsky.

This stream was met by Russian literature as a whole with great hostility, but one was justified in expecting it to be the carrier of something new and considerable. The political events of 1905-06, disturbing the whole course of life, also prevented the natural growth of this literary group. The cruel and absurd reaction that followed those years, revolutionized literature once again, and at that time blossomed forth with particular brilliancy the dismal talent of Leonide Andreiev who wrote: "The Red Laugh," "So Has it Been—So it Will Be," "The Seven Who Were Hanged" and several allegoric plays, penetrated with pessimism and despair.

To put it briefly: Russian literature was forced to preach and criticize, teach and moralize, judge and sentence, and call to struggle for freedom. It fulfilled the latter task brilliantly, for it is through the spirit of Russian literature that the Russian peo-

*Russian political movement in the eighties. Its idea was "to be one with the people."

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ple rose and were born once again back to life. But at the same time it carried into the flesh and blood of the Russian intelligentsia the poison of analysis, criticism, and nihilism, and weakened, I think irretrievably, the will power of the intellectual, by narrowing his spiritual world. For, together with criticism it gave nothing to him that could enlarge and deepen the self-consciousness of his personality, develop and strengthen his will. Bringing down the edifice of reality, criticism weakened the power of imagination.

One day a revolutionary sailor, who had been attending several lectures on chemistry, told me: "I do not think much of chemical analysis—it merely makes me see an indefinable void everywhere."

He put it very amusingly. But there are many people for whom the analysis of social matters also discloses nothing but a void. This happens particularly often with the people of a lazy and easily exhausted mind, qualities which are very often found with Russians, of whom the wise Pushkine said: "We are lazy and not inquisitive."

As to the Russian literature of to-day—it is so rich in an entirely new spirit that one feels unable to speak of it in such a brief survey. Young writers, whose name is legion, display a more unreserved approach to the material contained in their works, that are distinguished by an entire lack of political tendency; they have had to confront the cruel artfulness of life and justly appreciate the unlimited possibilities of imagination. They know that their task lies in transfiguring reality, hard and tarnished as it is, into a beautiful dream, an eternal feast.

The Lyre in 1927

MISCELLANY OF AMERICAN POETRY, 1927. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company. 1927.

Reviewed by O. W. FIRKINS

THREE things ask to be said about the current "American Miscellany," the new-type anthology, in which the sixteen authors choose their own poems and nominate each other. The first thing is their far-away-ness from—everybody. I go back through history by steps or stages, fifty years, one hundred and fifty, two hundred and fifty, three hundred and fifty years, and ask myself in order what Matthew Arnold, what Samuel Johnson, what John Milton, what Philip Sidney, would have made of more than half the poems in this volume. Old Chaucer's demure and arch perplexity, as he turned the pages, would be among the drollest of imaginable sights. What a distance between these men's lives and other people's, or, shall we say, between these men's verses and their lives! The oddest questions rise to one's mind. Do these poets ever wind their watches? Do they ever cut their fingers? Do they ever pinch their children's ears? The answer is of course, yes; but why do they make us ask the question? Why put the tripod so far from the hearthstone? Geoffrey Chaucer, riding on an eagle's back to a point in mid-sky, carried earth and its inhabitants up with him; Miss Léonie Adams, on the ground, tramples another planet. To a man of my type, who sees the chief hope of present-day verse along the path of felt and imagined actuality, the group, brisk as they are, seem to have lost their compass. They mstake the kind of sublimation requred by poetry. Let them take down their undusted Wordsworths. Poetry is the light that never was on sea or land, not the light on the sea or land that never was.

The second point to be noted is the intensity of their preoccupation with art. They care very much for their own way of doing things; their intonations are calculated and their gestures timed. Their art, in its favored moments, is consummate. Mr. Archibald Macleish, new to me, achieves, in his "You, John Andrew Marvell," an Horatian delicacy of finish; Elinor Wylie, in "Minotaur," reaches a high and disdainful perfection which dares—and safely dares—to recall Gautier; Miss Millay has three sonnet sextets which might be chiseled without profanation under pediments and between triglyphs. Free verse seems to be losing, or at least modifying, its grip; its spring, even in H.D.'s once plastic hands, is already autumnal. Mr. John Fletcher, who grows in saliency, makes interesting, though inconclusive, experiments in a verse that hovers between blank and free.

With this care is found much of proud and wilful negligence, as of a wayward pupil mispronouncing a word to disoblige an unloved teacher. Is the reader curious of enormity in rhymes? Let him turn to pages 7, 28, 276, of this book. Mr. Macleish, whose art I was just praising, ends lines of blank or half-blank verse with "the" and "and," —offenses for which he should be chased by bloodhounds. Mr. Robert Frost, vaguely glimpsing flowers through a car-window, closes what might have been the most delicately imaginative lyric in the volume with this stanza:

> Heaven gives its glimpses only to those
> Not in position to look too close.

Surely these are sounds which a self-protecting ear would not investigate. Mr. Frost grants his favors on precisely the same terms as heaven. Then there are the pointed writers who furnish every evidence of point except—the puncture. Psychologists tell us that an animal whose foot has been moved aside by electricity while a bell is sounded can be trained to a point when he will draw back his foot at the sound of the bell without the electricity. Substitute mind for body and wit for electricity, and some of these poets seem to be training their readers in a precisely similar agility. Everything is there except the charge. Akin to this is part of the verse of the eminently nameable person whom I shall forbear to name who makes the commonplace oracular by the simple expedient of saying "Hush" before and after it is uttered.

"I shall fight the darkness until I die;
Then I believe all will be light."
STEELE MACKAYE.

Woodcut by Arvia MacKaye, daughter of Percy MacKaye, to illustrate "Beyond," a poem by Steele MacKaye.

The matter of these poets, then, is far-sought, and their unfailing interest in method sometimes takes the form of a solicitous negligence. These are heavy discounts, but let me preface my third point by the remark that, if this poetry is mainly barren, it is not contemptible. While many of these poems, being simply unintelligible, are dull, the artists as units and as a group are interesting. My third point is that as artists they are virile; they are energetic seekers; if they miss the undiscovered port, they sail in novel seas, and they come back, if not with gold beneath the hatch, at least with bronze upon the visage. Moreover, they are not mere parts of a flotilla. Mr. Lindsay and Mr. Frost are individuals; Mr. Benét's demi-voltes among the constellations have their own peculiarity. Turning to the neophytes, Mr. Robinson Jeffers, who owns a temperament, and the pleasantly tomboyish Miss Nathalia Crane seem more strongly individual than artists of the same grade and the same ripeness would have been in almost any earlier period of our literature. In this wakeful and diverse energy there is hope. I think these people mainly plow the sea, the unharvested and barren sea, but, often before this, men by furrowing water have reached other furrows in which they could both plow and sow. One could frame no kinder wish for these adventurers.

"Most of us use fountain pens nowadays," says *John O'London's Weekly*, "and we all think of them as comparatively recent inventions. The fact is that this form of writing implement has been known for about two centuries past. The word 'fountain pen' itself actually appeared in the middle of the eghteenth century. In a dictionary published in 1754 'fountain pen' is defined as 'a pen made of silver, brass, etc., contrived to contain a considerable quantity of ink and let it flow out by gentle degrees'."

A Genius of the Theatre

EPOCH, The Life of Steele MacKaye, Genius of the Theatre, in Relation to his Times and Contemporaries. A Memoir by his Son, PERCY MACKAYE. 2 vols. New York: Boni & Liveright. 1927.

Reviewed by ELWYN A. BARRON

In the days when Steele MacKaye was in his prime, and drama was drama and not the noisesome by-product of the divorce mills, police courts, and brothels it is rapidly coming to be, Mr. Elwyn Barron of *The Chicago Inter-Ocean* was the foremost critic in America, and the author of several successful plays.

No one was more highly esteemed by good actors and playwrights, and feared by bad ones, and one golden word of praise or encouragement from Elwyn Barron was more precious than royalties.

If this tribute from his old admirer should somehow—somewhere—meet the spirit-eye of Steele MacKaye, there will, I am quite sure, come from Station G. K. W. (God, knows, where) a radio message to Elwyn Barron in Kansas City, that will give him the thrill of his life.

OLIVER HERFORD.

A PARAGRAPH of devout eloquence in the Epilogue tells us that the incentive to preparation for the writing of this work, fitting crown to the literary labors of his successful life, came to the author after the close of his father's funeral ceremony.

> On that bleak day, following close behind the frail form of my mother in her long black weeds, the organ music insufferably transmuting all life into anguish as we passed outward, I recall forever the shock of the glare of daylight and the pall of new responsibility, which has never wholly lifted since that hour—the overwhelming sense that some day I must bring him back, vividly back again to the world of breath and light his brave charm had lived to inspire and vivify. Thirty-two years is itself a lifetime, yet it has taken me that time to focus the records of his life. Even now, how may I know whether words have breath and life to re-embody him? Yet, as none of us who live shall ever be born again here, except through words pregnant with desire, perhaps—because of desire long pent—this memoir may not have failed of its living issue.

One who reads the graphic vividness of "Epoch" will have little doubt that Percy MacKaye has responded nobly to that inspiration of his young manhood with the output of his genius-equipped maturity, the biography of Steele MacKaye.

This book is more than the record of a life; it is a synthesis of many lives and the reflective epitome of a notable period, wholly original in form and method of treatment—an absorbing recital of aspirations, enthusiasms, achievement, fortitude, fidelities, and tragedy. It is not a work that lends itself easily to review, so multiple and varied are the elements of interest luring the reader page by page through the two large volumes. Romance, passion, humor; the poetic and the sordid; character in its noblest development and shreds of character at their meanest; the sanctities of home and family and the distractions of public concern; summits of hope and abysses of despair—"Epoch" teems with these, and other contrasts, presented with the candor and integrity of the poet, scholar, and student of humanity who understands.

Steele MacKaye has been designated "Genius of the Theatre." Innumerable attestors quoted throughout the volumes, confirm the title. He was that and more, but—the common experience of those who discern the realities beyond the horizon—he was smilingly or slightingly termed an "idealist" and a "visionary" by short-sighted contemporaries unaware that the beneficently practical is begotten always of ideals and visions. Had he devoted himself exclusively to any one of the various lines of mental activity that shared his productive interest—actor, dramatist, manager, educator, lecturer, inventor, creator—undoubtedly, with his splendid vigor of mind and body, he could have grasped that authority and fortune by which the "practical" estimate success; but he would not have become the wonderful personality and potential genius which, surmounting the defeats that treachery thrust upon him, glows triumphant in the irradiations of "Epoch." Truly a strange, eventful history, not like that of any other character developed in the conflicting struggle and vicissitudes of American life wherein, only too often, Soul is allowed but a subordinate part. The spirit of inquisitive adventure that impelled him as a little lad to climb to the top of a church steeple, under repairs, to "find out where God lived," animated him in every field of his life work; and if he did not secure the full measure of his quest he never failed to prove the validity of his purpose, the clarity of his artistic

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and scientific judgments. He gave more to the theatre and to theatrical art in practical benefits than any man before him ever gave, and the fruits of his genius are the enjoyment of thousands who do not know their indebtedness.

As one reads the record of this extraordinary life, this indomitable character, admiration grows into an eager desire that reward shall be equal to the passionate, but altruistic, zeal of the man's endeavor. That reward was all but realized. Had the faith and courage of his moneyed sponsors been adequate to combat pessimistic prejudice in a critical hour, the reward would have come in the thrilling glories of the Spectatorium, the greatest theatrically educative project ever devised. But panic-fear gripping at purse-strings shut off the building power when but a little more was needed to consummate the dream.

There are other crucifixions than that on the wooden rood, and Steele MacKaye had survived many of them; but this one came when physical resistance was broken by disease, and even the inflexible will that called out, "I'll be back in six weeks" could not keep the wasted body vital. The journey to California in quest of health was not quite completed. A little short of that destination the spirit of inquisitive adventure slipped away on another quest.

Whether "Epoch" be valued as a memorial to the genius and manhood of the father who inspired it, or be esteemed as evidence of the genius and manhood of the son who produced it, the work will stand to the honor of both, a lasting addition to the classic literature of America. Rich in anecdote and incident, in thought and fancy, in intimate reminders (and photographs) of persons famous in arts, letters, and science, friends of MacKaye, native and foreign, there is many a page that offers highly interesting matter for quotation where there is space allowed. But these really are lights and shades of the portrait and should be found in place. One feels in sympathy with the judgment of Percy MacKaye himself, who says in a paragraph of his preface:

> My father's living portrait, in all its elusive lights and shades of contrast, may only, I think, be limned at full length by the gradual self-revealings of his whole record as these gradually unfold themselves to the imagining reader. For this, his record must speak—and live—of itself, and not by another's epitome.

The reader studious of this portrait unfolding in the lights and shadows of a vibrant epoch will be repaid amply in interest and benefit for the time he gives to it.

A Social Experiment

THE COMPANIONATE MARRIAGE. By Judge Ben. B. Lindsey and Wainwright Evans. New York: Boni & Liveright. 1927. $3.

Reviewed by Bernard DeVoto

AGAINST the amenities of the unenlightened Judge Lindsey sins twice. In the first place he observes contemporary life without employing the lenses of moral preconception. In the second place, he reports what he sees without propitiating the conventions. Offenses against right-thinking are heinous, but those against right-speaking are insupportable. The Judge has learned what penalties are in such case made and provided.

It is a commonplace that educated people the world over, though not unanimously or as a class, have acclaimed Judge Lindsey's work, books, and ideas. His publishers have, a little offensively, covered the jacket of "The Companionate Marriage" with tributes from the great of this world. Whenever there is liberality of thought you will hardly find a dissenter from his judgments or one who does not believe him among the mightiest of the righteous. And, indeed, there is little possibility of dissent from his facts, however affrightedly a larger part of the public may denounce him for talking about them. "The Companionate Marriage" says merely, in effect, that the changing fashions of behavior noted in "The Revolt of Modern Youth" extend, on the whole more significantly, among the elders; that the institutions surrounding sexual union are far from ideal; that the companionate marriage is a social fact whether legalized or outlawed; and that there is a widespread, not necessarily new demand for renovation of our sexual folkways. All that is indisputable.

And yet, though the Judge's facts cannot be questioned, there is room for dissent from his conclusions, which is to say his expectations. One wonders whether the opinion of educated or enlightened people matters anything at all. Can even the great ones on the jacket, in this profoundest mystery, by taking thought add a cubit to our stature? The folk, we are taught, move eccentrically according to laws of which the very paths are obscure and the meaning quite withheld, our only knowledge being that reason has no part in them. It is established, further, that such changes as take place have no reference to books or the decrees of legislative assemblies.

* * *

The freedom Judge Lindsey calls for is a freedom of sexual action. It is a freedom that has always existed on the highest level of society and on the lowest. The companionate marriage, under one name or another, or under no name, has always existed among the very rich and the very poor. His observation is that this freedom is now surreptitiously spreading among the middle orders, and his demand is that surreptitiousness be taken away from it and science and frankness substituted. No one can question the desirability of such an outcome. But is it that easy? Have not even the middle orders always practised some measure of this freedom, witholding only conversation and legality? Legality is, of course, bound up with the concepts of religion and economics that may not be immutable but are certainly fundamental in the constitution of those orders. If the movement of social change, at the heart of the great mass, could be accelerated, then taking thought might be more promising than it seems at present. But the folkways, one repeats, cannot be accelerated from without. The periphery may be enlightened and vocal—or even mistaken—without noticeably affecting the center.

This is to suggest that sexual questions may be insoluble, and that Judge Lindsey's observations may after all concern only a change in fashion. History, especially American history, is sown thick with sexual experiments that proposed Utopia and achieved mention in indexes. The ragbag of defeated idealisms is crammed full of proposals as sane and as high-minded as Judge Lindsey's. Yet such formidable experiments as the Oneida Community, the Shakers, and the polygamous machinery of Mormonism did not make any more tolerable the unhappy union of the flesh or leave any impression on the social structure of America. Even if immediate legal recognition of the companionate marriage were within our power, would the hazard of sexual variation be reduced or the damned soul of man be comforted to any permanence?

One may feel that sexual problems are not susceptible of conscious guidance by the state, and still honor Judge Lindsey for the extraordinary value of his services, for his realism, his courage, and his charity. He is a north wind coming hardily into a discussion that has had little of frankness in it and less of fact. He is altogether on the side of the angels, and against his opponents all righteous men must be of one voice. But neither ideas nor discussion, nor yet facts, avail much to alter the currents of the earth. How, indeed, can the heart of man, moving darkly, be guided toward its goal, in the sexual agony, when one has after all these centuries of taking thought no knowledge of what that goal is?

The largest prize ever offered for a purely literary work, $25,000 in cash, has gone to Katherine Holland Brown of Quincy, Illinois, for her novel "The Father." The sponsors of the contest, *The Woman's Home Companion* and The John Day Company, offered two awards, $25,000 for the best novel submitted by a man and an equal sum for the best novel submitted by a woman, but as no novel entered by a man was considered worthy of receiving the prize, Miss Brown is the sole winner in the competition. The $25,000 award covers first serial rights and American and Canadian book royalties under $5,000, only. In addition to the cash prize, Miss Brown will receive royalties on American and Canadian book rights in excess of the $5,000 advance guarantee and will retain full motion picture rights, dramatic rights, and the like.

Of the 1,391 manuscripts entered in the competition, only 418 were written by men. The judges agreed that no novel submitted by a man was of sufficient merit as a serial and as a book to justify their awarding it the prize.

The Play of the Week

By Oliver M. Sayler

OUT OF THE SEA, A Play in Four Acts. By Don Marquis. Staged by Walter Hampden for George C. Tyler at the Eltinge Theatre, New York, December 5, 1927. New York: Doubleday, Page and Co. 1927.

Reviewed from Performance and Published Manuscript

IN the production of his first serious drama on the professional stage, Don Marquis has played in poorer luck that he did with his first comedy. While "The Old Soak" had the advantage of the flexible and sympathetic stage direction of Arthur Hopkins, "Out of the Sea," a modern tragedy of the Cornish cliffs with subtle legendary implications, is the victim in the theatre of heavy hands, clumsy minds, and sterile imaginations. My recommendation to read this play rather than to see it as presently acted at the Eltinge may be relished by doubters as surrender of my contention that a play never reads as well as it plays. "Out of the Sea," on the contrary, is perhaps the season's most egregious failure to realize the playwright's conception in the terms and expedients of the theatre, a deplorable example of what happens to dramatic literature when the theatre falls short in performing its share of a sensitive and intricate collaboration.

"Out of the Sea" is not enough of a literary masterpiece to override inept interpretation and to register its intrinsic merit on the minds of the casual playgoer in despite of theatrical mayhem. "Hamlet," "Macbeth," and "Oedipus" can defy novice, bungler, and charlatan. Lesser plays, even very good plays, succumb to the fog of misconstruction. Even when published, their inherent values may be underrated, due either to the competitive concept provided by a faulty rendition or to lack of any kind of production to reveal latent possibilities. Only thus can I understand the verdict of a newspaper critic, who may be presumed to be acquainted with the published manuscript, that "Out of the Sea" is closet drama. On the contrary, in the face of a blundering production, in the face of a manuscript that reveals many stilted and commonplace phrases and passages, I feel that Marquis has written a moving, sincere, and authentic tragedy in poetic prose which an able *regisseur* could translate even more movingly, more sincerely, and more authentically in the media of the theatre.

The deathless saga of Tristram, his Iseult, and Mark the King, is the hovering impetus of Marquis's play. Harding, an American poet, is guest at a country house on the coast of Cornwall, where Lyonesse was submerged a thousand years ago. He falls in love with Isobel, a waif from the sea and wife of Mark Tregesal, bully and misanthrope. In an atmosphere of doom and foreboding, these three live their passionate drama through to its tragic dénouement.

This modern parallel with one of the most ubiquitous of medieval legends is told in a vein of realism shot through with poetic feeling. It sedulously avoids overstepping the borders of the supernatural, but there is an omnipresent suggestion of another plane of consciousness which may be rationalized by nothing more formidable than coincidence of natural forces or human psychology verging on the eccentric. For the theatre to create and sustain this realistic atmosphere and its subtle overtones is a difficult but not an impossible task. It is easier, of course, to manage simple realism, and likewise the frankly supernatural. Each has its own well-defined theatrical terminology. The demand here,

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however, is for a supple recreative imagination, a plastic mastery of diverse media, and a sure and fastidious instinct working by no rule except the pragmatic one of fulfilling the author's challenge at every step.

It is just that flexible stage direction which I find lacking in "Out of the Sea." Seemingly convinced that the play must be either out-and-out realism or supernaturalism, and apparently unable to make up his mind which, Walter Hampden has resorted to the most threadbare *clichés*, now of one, now of the other. We have here no all-but-insuperable problem in *regie*, such as is presented in the more fantastic and irresponsible works of O'Neill and the other modernists. Compared with them, "Out of the Sea" propounds a simple problem in fusing the rational and the imaginative, a problem, however, which cannot be solved by the individual actor but which tests the mettle of the *regisseur* and proves his function in the theatre to be more than that of editor or superintendent. Don Marquis wrote a play, esthetically incomplete in itself but beckoning to his *regisseur* to catch up and carry on, as in a relay race. And Hampden has mistaken his direction and run backwards, carrying Rollo Peters, his designer, and most if not all of his players with him. Flashes of true insight on the part of Claude Rain, O. P. Heggie, and Lyn Harding only serve to heighten the general débâcle.

The most disheartening aspect of such a theatrical casualty as this is its waste—waste of dramatic literature which truly lives only when the theatre rises to its challenge; and waste of acting talents, in this case talents of a superior order. Such waste is less frequent today than it used to be before we trained directors of skill, sympathy, and resourcefulness, but it is for that reason all the more inexcusable. When it happens, it points to the grave responsibility of the theatre toward dramatic literature. We have heard enough and to spare about the responsibility of literature to provide the theatre with worthy material. Why should it, so long as the theatre shirks its own responsibility?

(Mr. Sayler will review next week the spectacular productions in Max Reinhardt's season of German repertory: "A Midsummer Night's Dream," "Everyman," and "Danton's Death," by Georg Buechner.)

PLAYS OF THE SEASON

Still Running in New York

BURLESQUE. By *Arthur Hopkins* and *George Manker Watters*. Plymouth Theatre. The personal equation beneath pink tights and putty nose.

THE GOOD HOPE. By *Herman Heijermans*. Civic Repertory Theatre. A European repertory veteran ably revived on our only repertory stage.

PORGY. By *Dorothy* and *DuBose Heywood*. Republic Theatre. The rhythms of Negro life interpreted in pulsing drama.

ESCAPE. By *John Galsworthy*. Booth Theatre. Leslie Howard *et al.* in the dramatist's latest—and last—play.

THE IVORY DOOR. By *A. A. Milne*. Charles Hopkins Theatre. An ironic and whimsical fairy tale for grown-ups.

AND SO TO BED. By *J. B. Fagan*. Sam H. Harris Theatre. A satiric and pungent comedy based on a presumable day in the amorous life of Samuel Pepys, Esq.

THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA. By *Bernard Shaw*. Guild Theatre. A debated and debating play set squarely on its feet at last by sound acting and discerning direction.

THE PLOUGH AND THE STARS. By *Sean O'Casey*. Hudson Theatre. The Irish Players lift the curtain on a Dublin tenement under the rebellion.

Little, Brown & Company offer a prize of $2,500, in addition to book royalties, for the best unpublished work on American History. It must be suitable for publication as a single volume of not less than 80,000 nor more than 135,000 words, must be written in popular form, and at the same time constitute a genuine contribution to knowledge. The judges are: James Truslow Adams, author of "The Founding of New England;" Worthington Chauncey Ford, editor, Massachusetts Historical Society; Allan Nevins, professor of American History, Cornell University. All manuscripts must be submitted to the publishers before October 1, 1928. The award will be made as soon as possible after the close. The work awarded the prize will be published in 1929. All manuscripts submitted in this competition will be considered first, as competing for the prize, and second, for publication by Little, Brown & Company on terms to be arranged between the author and publisher. In addition to the prize-winning manuscript the publishers expect to find others worthy of book publication on the usual royalty terms.

Mr. Moon's Notebook

December 10: *Are People People?*

ONE is hiding oneself most of the time, consciously or unconsciously. Perhaps that is why the "confession" type of book or magazine is seized upon so avidly, aside from the natural predilection of most people for scandal. It is certainly the reason why fundamental truths perfectly expressed proceed down the ages as great literature. So much is concealed and "bottled up" within us for the greater part of our lives that the clear and precise expression of something "we have always felt" is to most of us the greatest manifestation of genius. All the self-discipline in which we are early instructed is merely a learning of the art of concealment, by which I do not mean necessarily either disingenuousness or hypocrisy. In fact, as we all know, the individual who goes about blurting out anything that crosses his mind at the time is a pest that society rightly suppresses. Conversation should properly be an art, consisting of a selection of material adapted to the company in which you find yourself. It is, in fact, a difficult art that few rightly practice. And when I say that one should adapt one's conversation to one's company, I do not mean that one should, in the expressive American slang of the day, be simply a "yes-man." From the depths of every individual there are notable things to be dredged up by the acute conversationalist. Mere small talk is not that of which I am speaking. True conversation should be a hunt as absorbing and, yes, dangerous, as the stalking of a large cat of the jungle. Your *vis-a-vis* is hiding, for the most part, and you are desperately engaged (whether you know it or not) in hiding from him. You approach each other warily through thickets of words. The actual person before you is often concealed from you far more effectually than if he were made-up in any of elaborate disguises dear to the souls of amateur detectives.

* * *

We find out so little about people, even about our most intimate friends, that we turn to human printed confessions (even when we are quite aware of just how badly we are being "sold") with an acceleration of the pulse and a hope that at last we may be "getting a line" both on ourselves and on our acquaintances. Of late years psychoanalysis has profoundly stirred many minds, and, among them, some excellent ones, for the precise reason that the actual furtive personality lurking behind all outward ostents seemed to be susceptible at last of precise scientific assay. And in this realm also we have often been badly "sold." The individual's capacity for close sequestration would seem inexhaustible. Most of the cases listed in psychoanalytic books are those of quite simple animals. Well, all of us are indeed, in most aspects, extremely simple animals—but, I contend, not in all aspects. There remains *animula vagula*, that strange tenant, that queer and baffling, Protean and restless and incalculable inhabitant of ourselves. And as for the fabric of our lives, we cannot exhibit more than a portion of it to others though we talked and wrote from now till doomsday. We ourselves are not aware of the way the loom has woven the threads or of the full pattern that is to emerge.

Biography is an attempt, with a mass of material concerning a man's life before one, to make shrewd guesses as to what manner of man this was. A picture of the man emerges, evidently a likeness in many particulars, but there will always be a reservation of importance, a final and eternal withdrawal of the subject from the scribes, an *x*, an unknown quantity. And the greater the man, the greater the mystery.

* * *

I do not think that this is merely empty mysticism. It seems as true to me as the fact that volumes may be written concerning a truly great poem, while its essence forever escapes all surmise. In "The Road to Xanadu," Professor Lowes has accomplished one of the most inspired big-game hunts of this kind within our knowledge. And, in the end, there is still conjecture. The animatng force of works of genius is subject to such a peculiar process of delicate adjustments before it can be released, that no human being can track that phœnix. It is somewhat the same with a man's revelation of himself. We speak of how people 'reveal themselves," but we are talking only of the most fragmentary revelations or of those of merely minor importance. Certain main traits, certain mannerisms, a general type we may reasonably and truly perceive. But human beings never surrender the secret citadel, even though in love they often attempt that surrender. They have not the keys. This is not to say, naturally, that men cannot learn to know and manage men. It is entirely obvious that they can. But that which is involved in the affairs of men is not the most secret sprite of the being. It has other affairs. What those affairs are, the working mind but rarely knows, and when, a few times in life, the spark flashes to the brain, it is so briefly bright that the next instant one doubts it was ever there. Our purposes, we believe, are thus and so and this and that. It is probably quite otherwise. We find ourselves human parts of a scheme in which we take our infinitesimal places and act certain rôles for all sorts of complicated reasons reaching far back through the mists of history. We are here, and we are this person or that person. We are made of this stuff and that, created upon a certain plan, and subject to fundamental impulses in which we are all very much alike. Beyond these facts our thoughts seldom drift. Yet the gadfly is constantly among the herd. And our research into ourselves can never press on quite far enough.

* * *

Writers are constantly trying to catch and to imprison the sprite of which I have spoken. The greatest have told us certain things about it. Mankind has been exhaustively examined in print. But perhaps there is no language that can express the nature of the secret of any individual; for perhaps that involves the secret of all, and, knowing that, we should know what it is all about and exactly why we are here. Which is likely to remain forever beyond our comprehension.

Our old heavens are in cloudy ruins, they trail dispersed as a vapor; but I have often thought of a place beyond death where the riddle of the human race was revealed to all who crossed to that territory. It is axiomatic, of course, to many minds, and excessively trite, that death is the end, that there remains no personality after death. It is not axiomatic to me. However that may be, I have imagined conversations in the territory of which I speak which would be real converse at last, inasmuch as something in the center of the being, now hidden, would illuminate every word in the light of utter comprehension. Well then, you will say, why words? Perhaps another language, I answer; another technique of communication. At first thought one cries, "How unutterably dull! Everything understood at once! What of your fascinating hunt and your fascinating jungle? A mocking desuetude, an utter lassitude, an infinite boredom!" Well, we exist in our present fashion, why not *persist* in another? In the exercise of a faculty still even more strange than the actual nature of electricity there seems room, if one views it with imagination, for infinite adventure. Free in some free element, and on other errands. . . .

* * *

But that kind of thing is best expressed in poetry, for the words need whatever wings our human etymological devices can give them. And it isn't that we often bother (in what we view as this semi-precious fashion) concerning profound communication between people's spirits. In fact, we shy away from it like startled horses. We associate it with the mooing of people intense and dreary and usually psychopathic. If we sit down to talk we talk about what we think of a book or of a play or of a particular person or of the stock market or of the latest murder or of the latest divorce. People, to be sure, are a constant topic—the queer ways they act and why—but we keep both feet on the ground. If we talk about their spiritual insides, we talk usually some pseudo-psychoanalytic jargon. We are pretty hardboiled, and we don't believe in anything that we cannot explain "scientifically;" even though a true study of the sciences does little to disperse essential mystery.

Well, there is no doubt but we are "the people;" and that is about all there is to it. Yet it is not so important as it might seem, inasmuch as we really have very little idea of just what it means and of just what "people" really are.

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

(To be continued)

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What Price Biography?

JULIUS CÆSAR AND THE GRANDEUR THAT WAS ROME. By VICTOR THADDEUS. New York: Brentano's. 1927. $5.

Reviewed by TENNEY FRANK

Johns Hopkins University

IT was bound to come, the new biographical *flivver with the "latest features:"* the Freud starter, the Watson accelerator, the Strachey shock-absorber, the Dos Passos gear-shift, the Anderson mud-collector, the Joyce lubricator, all assembled in an Erskine sport coupé. At first glance this new life of Cæsar seemed to be one of the fashionable parodies, but it proves too dull to satisfy any such hypothesis. To judge from the machinery alone one might call it a novel based upon a few passages of Plutarch. For instance, Plutarch opens his life of Cæsar by the statement that Sulla tried to force Cæsar to divorce Cornelia, and, failing in that, confiscated her property. Mr. Thaddeus expands this incident into twenty-five exciting pages of threats, ominous hints, warning glances, smart repartee, and wily strategy, details invented to create verisimiltude. So much for his method.

It is not new nor is it forbidden. Fiction like poetry may be truer than fact. But this particular fiction is utterly reckless with the facts. Cæsar's birth is placed fifty years too late; the society in which he is made to move might as well be in China or Egypt; the senate that he has to deal with is certainly not the Roman senate and the characters of the book betray no resemblance to the persons who bore their names in history. It would require twenty-five pages to record the errors. Does that matter? Perhaps not very much in Cæsar's case. If anything we have heard too much of Cæsar as it is.

But what about the principles involved? Let us bring the method nearer home. Suppose that the proverbial New Zealander some day should write a life of our President in this strain: "In 1927 Tom Billson of Chicago invaded Washington with a gang of gunmen and forced the Senate to elect Mr. Coolidge dictator of the United States." Mr. Thaddeus's fiction is as exciting and about as veracious as that.

* * *

Of course he commands all the new devices. Cæsar's "stream of consciousness" when he broods over the pros and cons of divorce runs in well-worn channels. One need not object to that. Livy used to do the same thing when he let his people think aloud—though they did not think quite so entertainingly. Cicero's "suppressed desires" when, according to Mr. Thaddeus, he refused the advances of Clodia are reminiscent of recent best sellers. The whittling down of laudable deeds to fit them into sly motives harks back beyond the "Eminent Victorians" to Suetonius. The naïve behaviorism of Cæsar at Alexandria as depicted by Mr. Thaddeus would be acceptable to any Roman hedonist. These devices, though a bit tedious just now, have respectable antecedents. But that concerns us little. What we are beginning to ask is whether they are being used legitimately. We know something about Cicero. No one before has ever suggested that Cicero was ready to sell his eloquence to Clodia for a night's debauch. If Mr. Thaddeus wrote that of a living statesman of Cicero's character he would be given the lie direct. What right has Mr. Thaddeus to say it of the dead? His suggestion that Cæsar caused Clodius to enter the chamber of his wife Pompeia in disguise so that she might be compromised and speedily divorced could not possibly have occurred to a responsible historian. And Cæsar cannot now come to court to prove how nasty the insinuation is. There is also a slippery scene between Cæsar and Cicero that will pass the comprehension of any one who knows either. The book in fact reeks with incredible suggestions. If it were put out as fiction for the morbid it might pass as fifth-rate stuff, but it is not. It incorporates a number of far-fetched passages from Roman authors to give it a tone of verisimilitude, it mentions enough names of historical personages to carry conviction to the unwary, and it bears a title which obviously claims the attention of those who are looking for honest biography.

Let us for a moment grant that it is a new form of literature to which we have become half-accustomed in the last ten years, a mixture of satiric-pejorative caricature, pseudo-historical biography, and subconscious-pronologic stercoration. Would it be too much to ask the practitioners of this new art to get hold of the ascertainable facts in the case and to be sportsmen enough to apply it to men of recent times so that their libels might be flung back at them? And finally may we hope that publishers will adopt some simple and practical code for our protection? We do not ask for censorship, not even for the suppression of books like this. But it would not be difficult to label books "fiction," "history," and "biography" respectively; and if a book bears either of the latter labels it might be referred to a specialist in the field to say whether the contents are somewhere in the vicinity of the facts.

Rebellion in Kansas

REBELLION. By MATEEL HOWE FARNHAM. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company. 1927. $2.

Reviewed by ALLAN NEVINS

MRS. FARNHAM, the author of the prize novel in the second competition held jointly by the *Pictorial Review* and Dodd, Mead & Company, is the daughter of E. W. Howe of Atchison. But her literary ancestry is not what we should expect of one whose father wrote "The Story of a Country Town." That piece of stern realism, that picture of repellent lives, finds no counterpart here. Mrs. Farnham's affinities are with the milder, sweeter writers of American fiction —with the early Booth Tarkington, the early Mrs. Deland, the early Zona Gale. She has given us a novel scenting of lavender and tea-roses and 1905. Women's magazines have certain peculiar requirements as to fiction, and there seems not the slightest doubt that the *Pictorial Review* thought of these special demands when it helped award the prize. It is such a book as will appeal to the great mass of American women who pick up a magazine for diversion. It will not appeal to those who admire "The Story of a Country Town" and its like.

In a phrase, Mrs. Farnham has written a wholesome but undistinguished novel. Its atmosphere and spirit are thoroughly sound; its technique is old-fashioned; it lays a pleasant emphasis upon fundamental virtues, including the virtue of independence. In the sea of cheap and dirty sex fiction such a little islet as this has its refreshing aspects. Under a title which leads us to expect something daring and up-to-the-minute, we find a simple tale which at times verges upon the saccharine. The rebellion which it relates is the mildest kind of social complication. It is merely the rebellion of a Kansas girl of pioneer stock against an overbearing father. The heroine, Jacqueline, is left motherless; she fails to get on well with her father; she falls in love with a young man of humble birth, a carpenter who is making himself an architect; and when her father forbids the banns, she defies and outwits him. Practically speaking, there are only three characters, and the action is nearly as open and obvious as the Kansas landscape.

* * *

Unfortunately, the novel has few virtues except wholesomeness and a vivacious readability. The impression of thinness which the book leaves is not derived from the simplicity of the plot. W. D. Howells could take much the same theme—the rebellion of a daughter bent on marrying her own young man against her father's wishes—and give us something as wonderful as the first third of "A Modern Instance." The chief weakness of the book lies in the stereotyped, lifeless nature of the characterization. The daughter is an entirely perfect young thing—blithe, high-spirited, full of fine ideals, unselfish; the young man she loves is a Kansas Galahad—ambitious, pure, loyal, industrious, talented, and so on. As a foil against these two paragons we have a father who is simply a hopeless curmudgeon, blind, bigoted, and selfishly tyrannical. It is impossible not to feel that these people are all a bit unreal. It is impossible not to feel that the situation is highly artificial. In real life fathers do sometimes object to the matches their daughters propose; but small-town fathers in Kansas do not object to such perfect flowers of the human race as Jacqueline's suitor Kent, with his record as one of the only three men below age to be commissioned in the A. E. F., his genius in transforming barns into beautiful houses, his plucky and successful fight to get into the École des Beaux Arts, and so on. If they do, they have some better reason to assign for it.

We do not believe, in short, in the conflict upon which Mrs. Farnham bases her story. We do not believe that she has really illustrated the fine virtue of rebellion. What credit, what heroism, is there in rebelling against the kind of fatuous tyranny which Jacqueline's father represents? When Mrs. Farnham has written more books, she will present life, its divided loyalties, its allegiances and rebellions, as a good deal more complicated than in this tale of a girl abandoning Old Scrooge to rnn away to Italy with Prince Charming. The rebellion which really stirs our emotions and sets us thinking is the kind of rebellion which Willa Cather, for example, described in her story of the unhappy young wife in "O Pioneers!"—a book founded upon exact observation and delicate characterization of prairie people. Compared with such a work this story, with its obvious plot (complicated a little at the end by a kind of detective-story hunt for lost family papers) and its unconvincing characters, seems almost banal. Yet out of 1,500 manuscripts it bore away the prize and has been printed with a flourish of trumpets as the sort of thing a woman's magazine considers highly brilliant.

Robust Fiction

KITTY. By WARWICK DEEPING. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1927. $2.50.

Reviewed by GLADYS GRAHAM

WITH "Sorrell and Son" and "Doomsday" still on the best selling and most-called-for-at-libraries lists, Warwick Deeping launches "Kitty" to join in the popularity contest. The novels of Warwick Deeping all have a robust quality which apparently appeals strongly to Anglo-American fiction readers. His books are optimistic and they are positive. Whatever questions Mr. Deeping has asked of life he has found answers for, and he has not found these answers dusty. The world he writes of is a universe, not a chaos; his characters are rational and articulate; his stories have a beginning and an end. Cross sections of life undeleted and streams of consciousness unexpurgated have no charm for Mr. Deeping: his work is definitely selective.

It is partially this sense of a directing force, this captaincy of the soul, that has given the author of "Kitty" his enormous following. There is a large class of intelligent readers who temperamentally dislike what is known as realism yet who demand something better than the mild and amorous exploits of the young morons who lurk between the brilliant covers of "popular" novels. For this class Mr. Deeping has successfully written. His publishers say that the appeal of the Deeping novels is rooted in the fact that they treat of broad elemental themes in which the trivial and the transient have no place. This is to some extent true, but any number of novels go down into oblivion every year which have treated of exactly the same themes. They have lacked Mr. Deeping's optimistic sense of life, they have not had the advantage of Mr. Deeping's style. He is sonorous in a staccato day, and for that reason his sentences fall soothingly on many ears. Warwick Deeping has found an old-fashioned medium beautifully suited to his expression, and he has made excellent use of it.

"Kitty" is thinner than the two novels preceding it. The characters all fall into the class recently designated by E. M. Forster as "flat characters." Such characters can be expressed in one sentence, they are constructed around a single idea or quality, and they are easily recognized whenever they appear by the reader's emotional eye. The phrase is not, as it sounds, an entirely derogatory one, since flat characters have many virtues in secondary parts —Mr. Forster cites Dickens as being full of such—but when they usurp the leading rôles in a novel the latter tends to become formalistic rather than creative. In Mr. Deeping's latest novel it is hard to see how his typical post-war English girl fighting the typical possessive mother for the typical shell-shocked son can arouse any great degree of enthusiasm; yet this is what is already beginning to happen to "Kitty."

Sotheby's has been offering for sale a hitherto unpublished letter by Robert Burns, containing his immortal song, " My Love is like a Red, Red Rose." The letter, which is undated, is addressed to Alexander Cunningham and refers to Burns's meeting with the Italian musician, Pietro Urbani, who had the idea of setting and publishing various Scots songs. The poet and musician, however appear to have quarreled, and Burns's comments on Signor Urbani are exceedingly pungent.

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A Fundamentalist

MY LIFE IN ADVERTISING. By CLAUDE C. HOPKINS. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1927. $3.

Reviewed by EARNEST ELMO CALKINS

THERE is in Claude Hopkins's "My Life in Advertising" the interest that inheres in any unvarnished tale plainly told. To the ordinary reader with no more knowledge of advertising than he gains from looking at it in the public prints, there is the feeling of being taken behind the scenes and seeing how these wonderful results are accomplished, and they are certainly wonderful results when Claude Hopkins accomplishes them. He tells in his forthright way how he put such products as Puffed Rice, Pepsodent, Palmolive, and Goodyear Tires on the business map, and there is no reason to believe that his account is not the true one. But the advertising man is annoyed by the cocksureness of his attitude and his intolerance of all methods but his own. There are other ways, he says, but they are slow and uncertain. Nor were his clients immune from these other ways. With the same frankness with which he records his amazing successes for various advertisers he relates how they one after another grew weary of well-doing, yearned after the flesh pots of Egypt, such as colored pictures or institutional advertising, and turned away from the one true God. "Nearly every client quit me," he observes pensively, "when he got into smooth waters."

In advertising Mr. Hopkins is a Fundamentalist instead of a Modernist. He believes old ways are best and always will be. Advertising can be reduced to a standardized formula and he has found the formula. He has no use for art or brilliant writing and he lives up to his belief on every page. The curious effect of writing mail order copy has left its impress on his style. Mail order advertising, you should know, is addressed to simple, single-track minds and its chief virtue is a monotonous repetition of some simple command. "Cut out the coupon," "Fill in the coupon and send it today," "Don't fail to mail the coupon at once." The many advertising apothegms and theorems with which the book teems and bristles are reiterated like the chorus of an anthem. The author has no conception of any methods outside his own experience, no vision, no imagination, and no belief in intangibles. His definition of advertising is like Mr. Gradgrind's definition of a horse.

But this is no place to discuss the work as a technical handbook. It is much better as a history than as a guide book, a history of Mr. Hopkins's own adventure with business. He thinks he is telling us what he did to advertising, but actually he reveals what advertising has done to him. As such he is an interesting human study.

For many years he was heralded as the highest paid copy writer in the world. His salary was reported to be a thousand dollars a week. He confirms this report, but naïvely adds that his employer, A. D. Lasker, President of Lord & Thomas, and formerly head of the Shipping Board, was worried at the smallness of his compensation and insisted on paying him in proportion to the results of his work, whereby he earned or at least received in one year $185,000. What it all added up to he does not state, but the title of his book was originally "How I Made Five Million Dollars in Advertising." At any rate, the flower garden of his estate on the shores of Lake Michigan is half a mile long, and mass production of breakfasts in his summer home amounts to 3,500 a season. To these breakfasts come wealthy captains of industry, and though he mildly deplores having frittered away his life making other men rich, gaining for himself nothing but a modicum of fame, he insists he envies none of them. Money means nothing to him. His consuming passion is work. While his business life has comprised only thirty-five years, he insists it should be reckoned as seventy, because he always worked twice as long and twice as hard as anybody else. He has no recreations. He never played baseball, tennis, golf or bridge, and never learned to dance. Business is his only game. Even his book is not a diversion. It has the serious purpose of handing down to an unregenerate and skeptical generation of advertising men the mighty truths of the orthodox business religion. "The principles set down in this book," he says, "are as enduring as the Alps."

The Bowling Green

Notes on Rosy

DR. ROSENBACH is one of the world's greatest hunters—and finders—of manuscript; yet there will be no manuscript (in any exact sense) of his own very interesting "Books and Bidders." It was dictated, and a remarkable job of dictation it was. Avery Strakosch, who was at the notebook end of the collaboration, must possess in high degree the great gift of translucency, for the Doctor's own easy colloquy and lively humor come through with every symptom of identity. It is a book packed full of Dr. Rosenbach's learning, but also rich in merry anecdote. One remembers the great day when an editor of the *World*, wishing to pay high tribute to Miss Amy Lowell's Life of Keats, avouched in print that he "had read nothing so nugatory in a long time." It was his idea, evidently, that "nugatory" meant "full of nuggets." And if that were the meaning, "Books and Bidders" would also be nugatory, delightfully so.

The gift of jocundity seems to be a characteristic of the great bibliophiles. Here again, popular tradition is wrong as usual. The general notion of book collectors as prosy ancients, shiny at elbows, soupy on the vest, shrivelled and stooped by years among fungus-smelling pages, is certainly false in my observation. So far as I have seen them they are pink and plump, connoisseurs of vivacity, tellers of phosphorescent adventure, frolic amateurs of all life's more generous pastime. They seem to get more fun out of this planet than any other class of human beings. They extra-illuminate the book of life with fore-edge painting.

Book Collecting, like horse racing, has always been the supreme sport of the Rich and Powerful. But it now stands on a peculiar apex of joy in America, for it has seriously entered the ranks of Big Business. Dr. Rosenbach often shows the specially amused and quiet smile of the scholar who has outwitted so many great merchants at their own game—as indeed the scholar so often can, if he cares to. Not without humor he tells of the hard-headed investors who tuck away Conrad MSS and Whitman items in safe deposit boxes as negotiables more stable in time of crisis than many an engraved certificate. Dealers themselves confess their amazement at the soar of prices. The old bookseller, once the symbol of musty eccentricity, is now often a power in finance. Ernest Dressel North, in the preface to his 25th anniversary catalogue, points out that the price of a single book offered in that catalogue (a 1667 Paradise Lost, priced at $5500) exceeds the total of the prices of the 401 items listed in his first catalogue in 1902. And he adds, remarking on the prices lately paid for Shakespeare folios and Gutenberg Bibles, that perhaps in another twenty-five years only Henry Ford and John D. Rockefeller, Jr., will be able to afford such books. Dr. Rosenbach himself, who is slow to make predictions, suggests that $250,000 will be a modest price for a Gutenberg Bible ten years hence. None of us have forgotten how Mitchell Kennerley, two or three years ago, brought home the Melk copy of the Gutenberg from England in two suit-cases—one volume in each case—and kept them in his cabin under his berth. It was the wisest thing to do. He would not even entrust them to the purser's safe, for he wanted to be able to grab them instantly in case of any sudden taking to the boats. So also did Colonel Isham, generously carrying some of the incredible richness of his Boswell MSS to show to a sanhedrim of the Three Hours for Lunch Club, entrust them to a gruesome old wicker valise that looked only likely to contain a week-end wash. No one, in any horrid emergency, would have suspected such luggage of secreting anything notorious.—It was that copy of the Gutenberg Bible, incidentally, that Dr. Rosenbach bought for $106,000, and which is now at Yale University.

There will always be many to deplore so much discussion of these great memorabilia of human life in terms of price and trading; yet that sentimentality may easily become only an empty snobbery. Money after all is the only esperanto we have, the sole universal measure of our possessive passion for things that (for reasons of our own) are precious. And in the case of the perfect amorist, the paramour of print, he only thinks of the thing in terms of price before he has got it. Once acquired, the money phase is oddly irrelevant. It was only a few years ago that Dr. Rosenbach with characteristic humor gave tranquil Walnut Street in Philadelphia a considerable shock. He put a collection of Shakespeare folios and quartos in his show window with a small card stating that the price of the lot was $985,000. I cannot resist the feeling that (except for the amusement it would have caused him) he would have been very unhappy if anyone had walked in, paid the price, and taken away the books. It would have been a sound investment, too, for anyone who could afford to tie up a million cash for a few years.

* * *

Perhaps it was because Dr. Rosenbach was born in Philadelphia in its great romantic year, the year of its famous Centennial in '76, that he was endowed with his miracle of book instinct. For, though the metaphor is not appropriate to his solid form, he is a willow-wand for the hidden springs of book lore. He is the Pied Piper of rare editions. He blows an airy wheedling note, and the old vellums and calfskins come trotting after him. They disappear into his twin Venusbergs—on Walnut Street or on Madison Avenue—and if he happens to take a fancy to keep them himself they are never heard of again. There is no one in the world rich enough to buy from Rosy anything that he thinks belongs on his own private shelves. There is no man more generous with his treasures, and no man who gets a finer sentimental pleasure out of the things he values for associations of their own. When he was only eighteen, still an undergraduate at the University of Pennsylvania, he spotted the fact that a group of old pamphlets bound up together included the long-lost first edition of Dr. Johnson's famous Drury Lane Prologue. These, with beating heart, he bought for $3.60 in Stan Henkels' old auction-room in Philadelphia. And I think the most significant comment on Rosy's career is that a few years later, when he needed money very badly, he refused an offer of $5000 for his treasure. The panting customer toiled after him in vain. He still has it.

And, as one might expect from one who has risen so high in his own line, Dr. Rosenbach's book is full of good wisdom for the beginning collector, pointing out the very necessary fact that one does not have to begin with high-priced books. He is shrewd enough to know, though too modest to point out, that the great prizes in the collecting game will always go to those who have that queer specific instinct for which there is no counterfeit and no substitute. But the real fun, if you are a beginner in the collecting field, is to stake your own judgment. To choose something in which you yourself believe—perhaps the work of some still unknown author. The "wild vicissitudes of taste" in this matter are part of the sport. I see, for instance, in a current catalogue, that H. M. Tomlinson's "The Sea and the Jungle," which I bought for $1 in 1920, is now listed at $90. I haven't the faintest intention of selling my copy; but it is a pleasant confirmation of one's own judgment. Can any zigzagging of the stock market give one better fun than that? The kind of collecting that appeals to me is not chasing after things that everyone knows are great, but trying to hunt out the things that are going to be great ten or twenty years later. And this means, as Dr. Rosenbach points out, a lot of brooding over catalogues. He himself has a special marsupial overcoat, with a specially large pouch built in, to carry his brood of catalogues which he studies diligently as he rides to and fro between Philadelphia and New York.

"Books and Bidders" is so full of nourishing anecdote that I have made no attempt to cull any of its plums. Those who are interested in the comfortable folly of book-collecting will find them for themselves. But one thing should be said: that Dr. Rosenbach has an unerring instinct for knowing how a story should be told. He always begins with a vivid little 'lead,' as reporters say, that lures you into the narrative unawares. Like this—

"The *First Folio* had lain idly at anchor for two long, sultry days . . . . "

"The gas lamps in Stan Henkels' auction rooms were being extinguished . . . . "

"It was a cold winter in my uncle Moses Polock's shop in Philadelphia . . . . "

I'm sorry there's no manuscript of this book. If there were, I think I should go after it for my own collection.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

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HERE is a new Goldsmith first edition. Eighteen essays, printed anonymously in various periodicals of the eighteenth century, have been discovered and identified by Professor Ronald S. Crane as authentic Goldsmith material. They are published now for the first time under Goldsmith's name and together constitute the largest single addition to the canon of Goldsmith's essays that has been made for more than a century.

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Books of Special Interest

On Chinese Art

CHINESE ART. By R. L. HOBSON. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1927.

GUIDE POSTS TO CHINESE PAINTING. By LOUISE W. HACKNEY. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1927. $10.

Reviewed by LANGDON WARNER
Fogg Art Museum

TWELVE pages of extremely adequate introduction by the best authority in the world on Chinese pottery and porcelain and one hundred colored plates of Chinese lacquer, ceramics, bronze, painting, and jade, make a book that is immediately impressive. One jumps for the splendid illustrations (one hundred of them) and one reads the twelve significant compact pages of text wishing for more. Surely this must be the ideal book for a Christmas gift and yet—and yet where is the scholarship and the authority that we have learned to expect from Mr. Hobson's pen? Where is the wealth of new material and of precious old things which the title "Chinese Art" promises?

If the Chinese were great at anything it is conceded that they were masters of landscape painting. But of the hundred brilliantly colored plates only five are devoted to painting and but one of these is a landscape—"after Li Su-hsun." With the collections of Europe and America and the East to pick from he has not given us a single splinter of rock in the ink of Ma Yuan, not one distant peak of Hsia Kuei, no romance of Mi Fei's brush. The other paintings shown are well enough, two of them are even great though available in several other publications. But the sixteen lacquers (remember he gives only five paintings) seem almost an over-emphasis of this interesting craft. For lacquer in China, in spite of the implication in the carefully worded preface, never reached the heights touched by the Japanese.

A third time and a fourth we turn the lustrous colored pages before the truth dawns. One is slow to think an unkind thought when a new book appears *on a subject in a subject* where so much is needed. One should be slower still to write an unkindness about a distinguished scholar to whom we owe so much. But the truth must out about the book—the colors that shine so expensively gay are all alike on all the pages. The colors are simply bad. Porcelains and jades are perhaps expressed better than lacquers but the reproductions of paintings, even the meagre five devoted to that greatest of the Chinese arts, are all glossy mud. Every value is wrong, every tone relation is hopelessly false. If indeed this is Chinese Art as the title reads I must lay it down with a sigh. Luckily it is not and we have other books by Mr. Hobson and by his colleagues in the British Museum to prove it.

Surely it is not captious criticism to say that a book full of illustrations without an index is an imposition. In his introduction the author tells us that two decades have seen the full span of our western knowledge of this vast subject. Can it be that Chinese art is outworn and we have reached the stage where jaded appetites demand merely a Christmas book from a master? We crave fresh knowledge from him who has not disappointed us in the past, and true colors, not false, from the English printers who made the book and who could, if they only would, give us better than we can make ourselves.

A new approach to this almost illimitable subject and illustrations not found in all the other books on Chinese art make Miss Hackney's volume important. Certainly it is handsome. Perhaps after all it is not illogical to think of Chinese painting in terms of the author's chapter headings: "Why the Chinese painter painted what he did;" "Flowers, Birds and Animals;" "Figure Painting," etc. etc.

But one can imagine more satisfying arrangements with less emphasis on subject and more on that noble process of unfolding the national genius which is so impressive to the student of Chinese painting. Then too, though Chinese art has not yet produced any Berenson, with his terrible microscope, one would relish some actual analysis of a particular masterpiece, some light thrown by pure reason on the dark places.

We have criticized Mr. Hobson of the British Museum for failing to include paintings from Oriental and American collections in his book. Our author has produced one similarly limited, but this time to our own Atlantic seaboard. And yet it gives one so much pleasure to find that one person at least has dug up from the Boston Museum those masterpieces in the Ross collection painted on bricks, that many shortcomings are to be forgiven. They are among the greatest Oriental treasures in this country and quite unknown to most people. She must be forgiven also for having neglected our newest and one of the most important "Guide Posts" when she omitted the flood of wall paintings which has come to the West during the last five years. Many of these are noble compositions echoing with undoubted accuracy the masterpieces of an earlier time. It is harder to forgive her for slighting the ancestry of these frescoes, which still remain on the walls of the cave chapels of the West and which are Guide Posts more packed with significance than any to be found later along the way. In fact her whole treatment of Buddhist painting reflects the attitude of the rest of the book in the way the deities who sit for their portraits are listed and the great driving force which produced these icons for worship is not considered.

But the condescending reviewer becomes a bore. This book may contain no fresh tidings for Sinologues but persons to whom the subject is fresh will find it full of facts grouped in a readable rather than a logical manner. Chronological lists of artists and museum catalogues will never catch such people; from their ranks the future collectors and even the connoisseurs will be drawn. There is an index, and there is a bibliography for beginners who are content with what can be found in English. The illustrations are well chosen and executed.

Garden Lore

GERARD'S HERBALL; The Essence thereof distilled by MARCUS WOODWARD. London: Gerald Howe. 1927.

Reviewed by MARION PARRIS SMITH

ANY reprint or abridgment of Gerard's "Herball or Generall Historie of Plantes," however charming or discriminating it may be, must send one back to the old calf-bound original folio with renewed zest. It is of course not possible for every lover of English gardens to possess an original Gerard. For most people this delightful book of selections must suffice. But the foundation volume of any real *collection* of English books on gardening is a Gerard's "Herball," as its crowning treasure is a Parkinson's "Paradisus." My copy of the "Herball" is the second edition, edited by Thomas Johnson, and once belonged to Mary Wotton. She notes on the title page that she acquired it in 1634, "the tenth year of King Charles' reign."

John Gerard was born at Nantwich in Cheshire in 1545 and died in 1607. In his youth he studied medicine, travelled in the North of Europe and possibly about the Mediterranean. On December 9, 1569, he was admitted to the Company of Barber Surgeons in London. He seems to have been eminent in his profession for in the year 1598 and again in 1607, he was appointed examiner of the candidates for admission to the Company. But his main interest in life was in botany and horticulture, and to this day his book can infect all readers with his enthusiasm and vivid curiosity about all forms of plant life. Lord Burghley became his patron and appointed him superintendent of his town garden on the Strand, and of his great show place, Theobald's, in Hertfordshire. In addition Gerard had his own "Physick Garden" in Holburn, and published in 1596 a list of his plants, of which a single copy of the first edition exists in the British Museum. This is the first catalogue in English of any public or private botanical collection.

This slender volume is evidence of the interest which the Elizabethans took in garden lore, especially in "outlandish plantes" and "exoticks." From the rediscovered Far East, and the newly discovered Western World, information about rare plants, and in time, new species of trees, shrubs, and flowers began to appear in Europe. In Gerard's early manhood (1577) the first English translation of Monrades's book on the flora of the West Indies was made by John Frampton; "Joyfull Newes out of the Newfounde Worlde, wherein is declared the virtues of herbes, trees, oyles, plantes, and stones." In 1580 Sir Walter Raleigh returned from circumnavigating the globe with a notable collection of plants, many of which were planted at Theobald's. 1588 saw the return of Cavendish. Moreover it was an age of great botanists, Dodoens, Clusius, Camerarius, Lobel, Bergzabern, better known as Tabernaemontanus, and a host of lesser men. Their books were eagerly read and English translations began to appear in the last quarter of the sixteenth century, when Gerard's book was in the making.

The famous "Herball," dedicated to Lord Burghley, "not as an exquisite worke (for I know my meanesse) but as the greatest gift and chiefest argument of duty that my labour and service can afford," was published in December, 1597. Strictly speaking it was not an original work. It was based on the "Stirpium Historiae Pemptades Six" of the great Flemish botanist Dodoens, while the classification of plants followed that of Lobel. Indeed Gerard was not entirely ingenuous as to his source material. In his note "To The Courteous and Well Willing Reader," he states that "Dr. Priest, one of our London College, hath (as I heard) translated the last edition of 'Dodonaeus,' and meant to publish the same; but being prevented by death, his translation likewise perished." But his scholarly editor and stern critic, Thomas Johnson, who brought out the greatly enlarged second edition in 1633, states in a long bibliographical introduction, that Dr. Priest's translation fell into Gerard's hands "which is apparent from the worke itselfe, which you shall find to contain the Pemptades of Dodonaeus translated so that divers chapters have scarce a word more or lesse than what is in him." This borrowing, Johnson attributes to an endeavor on Gerard's part "to performe therein more than he could well accomplish; which was partly through want of sufficient learning," and he adds "But I cannot commend our Author for endeavoring to hide this thing from us, cavilling (though commonly unjustly) with Dodonaeus wheresoever he names him."

But John Gerard had a touch of the Shakesperian ability to appropriate another's work and yet transmute it into something utterly original and delightful. His method is to describe each plant minutely, to indicate the place where it is to be found, its name in various languages, its "temperature" or qualities as a simple, and its "virtues" or medicinal qualities. Caution must be exercised in reading these last items aloud in mixed company. Many of the descriptions have the lyric note of the true plant lover; thus, "the Eglantine or sweet brier doth oftentimes grow higher than all other kinds of roses; the shoots of it are hard, thicke and wooddie, the leaves are glittering, of a beautiful green colour, of smell most pleasant." Constant references are made to friends who have sent him plants; "the double Daffodill I received of Robinus of Paris," the German Fleure-de Luce Joachinus Camerarius, "the sonne of old Camerarius of Noremburg . . . himselfe did give me at his being in London," and the great Clusius himself sent a Salomon's seal "to Mr. Garth, a worshipfull gentlemen, and one that greatly delighteth in strange plants, and who very lovingly imparted the same to me." There is much miscellaneous lore throughout the book as to the original habitat, the discovery, and the diffusion of new species.

The "Herball" is divided into three books; the first "containing grasses, rushes, reeds, corne, Flags, and bulbous or onion-rooted plants," the second, "herbs for meate, medicine, or sweet-smelling use." The third book is hospitable to miscellaneous knowledge. It includes "gums, roses, some Indian plants, and other rare plants not remembered in the proeme to the first book. Also mushrooms, corall, and their several kindes." The whole is embellished by 2717 wood-cuts, so exquisitely and realistically drawn, so true in every detail of root, leaf, stem, and flower that it still performs the functions which its author promised to his patron. In Gerard's Herball "a man doth behold a flourishing show of summer's beauties in the midst of winter's force, and a goodly spring of floures when abroad a leaf is not to be seen." It is in truth a most lovely book.

"In the White Swan Inn at Stratford-on-Avon," says the London *Mercury*, "there has been discovered, during a process of redecoration, a series of Tudor wallpaintings which had been whitewashed over. The subject of the series is the story of Tobias: the Elizabethan costumes of that personage and his companions leave no doubt about the date of the work. It is not so long since the magnificent series of earlier frescoes in Eton Chapel was brought to light, and it is impossible to wonder how much more in the way of old English painting remains covered over with wash, plaster, or woodwork."

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A Privileged Moment

"SOMETIMES an apparently simple question develops surprising powers of revelation in the answers it stirs up. Such a question is: "What books did *you* like as a child?" This will divide and illuminate the personalities of any group assembled. "Strange, I suppose, but I never did like 'Alice'." "Well, I loved 'Alice,' but do you know I never liked Kipling—he seemed so outlandish." And so it goes, thicker and faster, with the grown-up manner of each fading out under an unwonted naturalness, an interesting childishness. The truth of the matter is, if one remembers anything—in this case any book—for twenty years, or forty years, well enough to talk vividly about it, one's imagination felt a real stirring of the waters at first. And these stirrings are capable of recurrences, lesser in intensity, but perfect, with identical grass and flowers at the edge of the pool, and the same face, your own, above it. Each recurrence levels age and proves startlingly the continuity of personality. Now, it is easy to understand that this room is filled with Johnny and Sally and Henry and Joan; the children who stopped running to read are actually **here. And the** privileged moment, as we have already suggested, shows forth a rich diversity, characteristically of affairs of the imagination. The center of the book question, the effect of book on reader, lying bared, we see flashingly how strictly that effect is conditioned by the receptivity of the reader, and how strongly that in turn is influenced by native peculiarity. All this lies about us every day in the world of books, but it takes a turn of the key of childhood to catch it unspoiled by too much reflection and too great a regard for other people's opinion. Suddenly we see that it is absurd to ask such a question as: "What sort of book is good for a child?" or even: "What sort do you think children like?" Our question: "What books did *you* like as a child?" is the only safe one. We know children well at this particular moment—they are not only themselves but ourselves. Look at this roomful of grown-up children, no one agreeing with another one, no norm showing at all, and try to write, or even to mention a book that will please us all. The mysteries of personality, the raying of intelligence, forbids!

Reviews

ALI BABA. By HELEN HAIMAN JOSEPH. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1927. $1.50.

Reviewed by AGNES JAMES MCCANDLESS

THREE very playable plays for children or puppets, in which Mrs. Joseph uses some old themes in a new way. The first is Ali Baba, gay and bloodthirsty, with here and there some rhymed jingles by the forty thieves. It is rather long and elaborate for very young children but Mrs. Joseph herself provides for cutting and simplifying. The second is our old friend Beauty and the Beast and while not exactly in modern dress, is commendably beyond the baby-talk period. The third play is the story of Joseph and his Brethren, arranged for shadow tableaux. In all three we thank Mrs. Joseph for breaking away from the influence of the Susie Series and the Dollie Books in Drama for Little Folk. Her plays may be presented to the ruthless intellects of the younger generation without fear of their being booed.

MIDWINTER. By KATHARINE ADAMS. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1927. $1.75.

Reviewed by ELIZABETH WOODBRIDGE

THIS book is well named. Between its covers is coldness abundant—cold fiords, cold birch forests, a deserted castle to freeze your very bones, a cold, gay Christmas-tide in Stockholm at its holiday best, a desperate journey over icy seas and snow-wastes. To make the story, we have a group of lively, healthy young people, two of them American, the rest Swedish, who don't mind cold in the least, though they love comfort too—also éclairs and hot chocolate and stoves.

The book is like midwinter, too, in a certain bareness of outline, of manner. Its adventures are told with a curious simplicity, its characters are rather naively drawn, like the people in an old folk-tale,—and none the worse for that, perhaps, against their sub-arctic background of fresh snows and flaming sunsets. The author seems to have a peaceful confidence in the inherent interest of her material which is rather refreshing. One is reminded of "Hans Brinker" and "Heidi."

The young peasant artist, Nore, the peasant girl, Guldviva, have the quality of folk-tale figures, and they never quite blend with the group of everyday boys and girls that surrounds them. They belong with the great white cat, Sno Kronung, the gray wolf, and the winter birches.

A pleasant book for a boy or girl to read, curled up before a blazing fire, and outside, the snow-flakes floating up against the window-pane.

A Home Shelf

By EMILY RUSSELL MCDEVITT

EVERYONE may not be able to afford one of the big standard encyclopedias but every family can and should start a shelf of reference books with special attention to the children. One source book in the home is worth two in the public library. The habit of research should be cultivated—looking up mooted questions for oneself fosters initiative and makes a more lasting impression than merely "being told" by some adult. Even if the material at hand is not exhaustive, having once started on a quest in the midst of battle, so to speak, an urge to carry it further is almost sure to be aroused.

Effort has been made to keep the list down to minimum requirements in the various fields and to select books reasonably priced. It can be greatly extended as specific interests develop, and if you can afford the complete Burton Stevenson poetry anthologies, the Outlines of Art (2 vols.) and Natural History (3 vols.) with their beautiful, colored illustrations, by all means get them.

THE ARTS

Bullfinch. Age of Fable. McKay. $2.

Reinach, S. Apollo. An illustrated history of art throughout the ages. Scribner. $2.

Untermeyer, L. This Singing World. Harcourt, Brace. $3. (Or any one of the many good poetry anthologies.)

Whitcomb, I. P. Young People's Story of Music. Dodd, Mead. $3.

OUR WORLD

Champlin. Young Folks' New Encyclopedia of Persons. Holt. $5.

Champlin. Young Folks' New Encyclopedia of Places and Events. Holt. $5.

Hammond. New Home and Office Atlas. $6.

Hillyer, V. M. Child's History of the World. Century. $3.50.

Marshall, H. E. English Literature for Boys and Girls. Stokes. $5.

Ploetz, Carl. Manual of University History. Putnam. $5.

Wonder book of Knowledge. Winston. $2.50.

World Almanac. Current edition. 50 cents.

OTHER WORLDS

Proctor, Mary. Young Folks' Book of the Heavens. Little, Brown. $2.

WOODS AND FIELDS

Fabre, H. Story Book of Science. Century. $2.50.

Comstock, A. B. Handbook of Nature Study. Comstock. $5.

WRITING AND SPEAKING

Bartlett. Familiar Quotations. Little, Brown. $4.50.

Or: Putnam's Book of Quotations, Proverbs and Household Words. Compiled by Benham. $6.

Dictionary. Winston's New Simplified Dictionary. Winston. $5.

Or: Webster's Collegiate Dictionary. Merriam. $5.

Or: Funk and Wagnalls' Practical Standard Dictionary. $5.

Woolley. Handbook of Composition. Holt. $1.25.

(See page 475 for Brief Mention of Children's Books.)

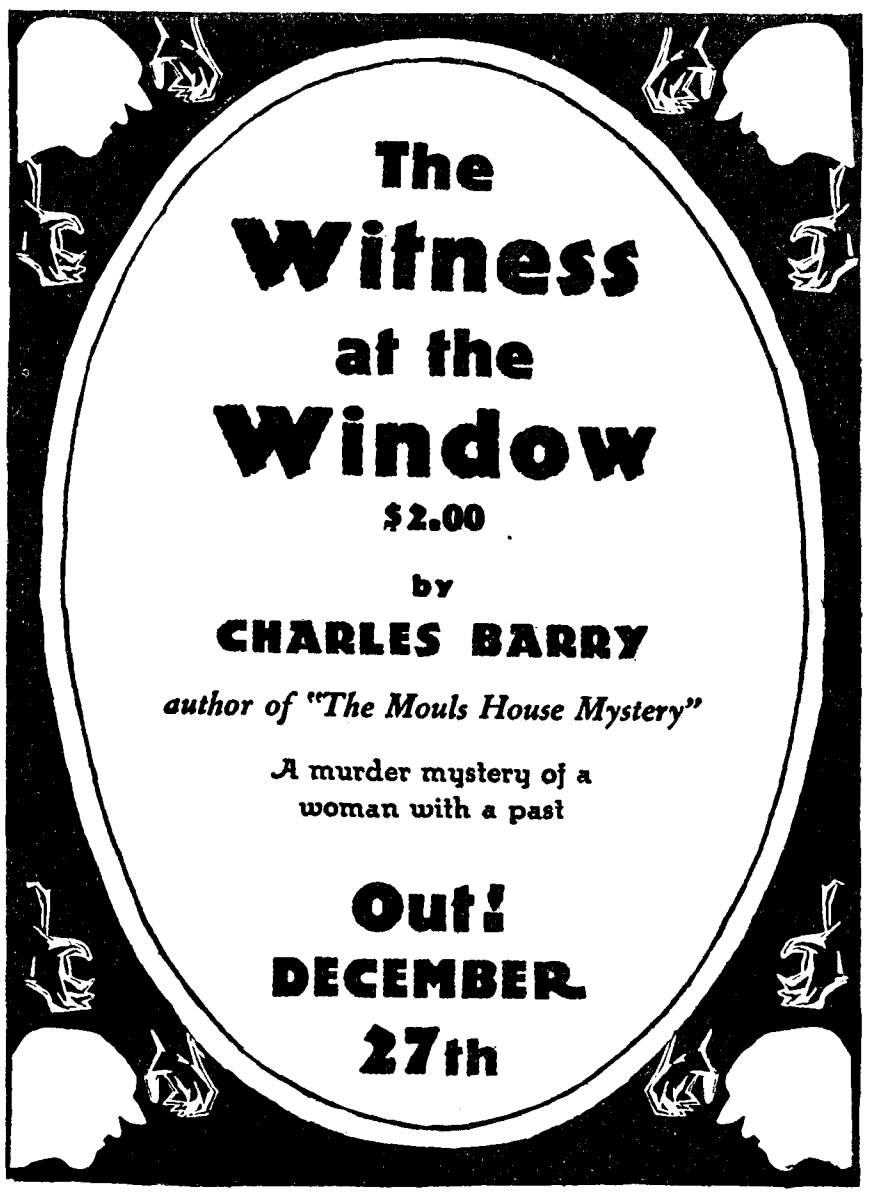
AN APOLOGY

IN a full-page advertisement of WOODROW WILSON: LIFE AND LETTERS in the *Saturday Review* of December 10th, we quoted Edward Parker Davis, M.D., as writing of the book in the *Saturday Review:* "He (Baker) aims to set down the man himself, his methods are the most modern."

WHEN he saw the advertisement, Mr. Ray Stannard Baker, author of WOODROW WILSON: LIFE AND LETTERS, informed us that this quotation was inaccurate; that in fact, Dr. Davis had said just the opposite. On again reading Dr. Davis' article, which appeared in the *Saturday Review* of November 19th, we found that this was so. We give here Dr. Davis' exact words: "He aims to set forth the man himself. His method is not the most modern." He continues: "We are told nothing of the endocrinology of the Wilsons and Woodrows, he attempts no Freudian psychoanalysis . . . How interesting to a modern psychologist would have been the condition of the dendrones, neurones, axones and synapses of Wilson's brain during critical periods of his career; what were his conditioned reflexes? but all this we are spared."

THE misquotation is glaring. Our mistake was inexcusable and inexplicable. We can only say that it was unintentional. We offer our apologies—to Dr. Davis, to the author, to the *Saturday Review* and to its readers.

Doubleday, Page & Co.



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Anatole France*

By Paul Valéry

VOTRE grand confrère, messieurs, moins ignorant des hommes, n'avait point cette confiance exagérée dans les vertus de son lecteur, dans son zèle et dans sa patience. Il était d'ailleurs d'une courtoisie dont le premier effet devait être de ne jamais séparer les idées que l'on ose émettre du sourire qui les détache du monde. Il était bien naturel que sa gloire ne souffrît point de cette élégance. Vous savez à quelle hauteur prodigieuse elle atteignit en quelques années. On s'aperçut bientôt que cette gloire, insinuée si doucement, en arrivait à balancer la gloire des plus célèbres, et l'on se prit à admirer comme ce génie assez malicieux s'était élevé en se jouant jusqu'à la stature des colosses des lettres européennes de ce temps-là. Il avait su mêler et opposer aux œuvres massives et parfois brutales de ces hommes alors si puissants, les Tolstoï, les Ibsen, ses ouvrages légers qui ne prétendaient qu'à effleurer dangereusement ce qu'ils empoignaient et ébranlaient de toutes leurs forces: l'ordre social et l'édifice des nos mœurs.

Je ne me flatte pas, messieurs, de vous peindre heureusement un homme si considérable que je n'ai fait qu'entrevoir un jour, tandis que sa mémoire est toute vivante dans la plupart d'entre vous.

Toutes les chances d'erreur sur la personne, et même d'inintelligence de l'œuvre, sont avec moi. Vous sentez, du reste, combien peut m'imposer une substitution si inégale de talents et quelle audace je me trouve de m'essayer à ce portrait. Quand le devoir de composer cette oraison de louange m'est apparu avec précision, je n'ai pas laissé de la trouver bien redoubtable. "*Quel beau sujet!*" me disait-on. Et je pensais qu'il est des écueils admirables!

Messieurs, quoiqu'un éloge me soit, par essence, que fait de la fleur d'une vie, et quoique la vérité qu'il travaille n'y doive paraître que contenue et comme discrètement maîtrisée, toutefois, il s'introduit toujours et nécessairement, dans le travail de sa préparation, un sentiment assez puissant et presque solennel de justice.

Nous ne pouvons, en méditant ce que nous prononcerons ici sur celui dont nous héritons le fauteuil, que nous ne soyons assez tourmentés dans nos consciences par ce jugement particulier du mort que nous devons délibérer en nous-mêmes avant que d'en extraire et de mettre en forme ses plus belles conclusions et ses motifs les plus admirables. Nous disposons assurément de la lumière qui éclaire notre modèle: mais lui-même, comment le saisir? Comment s'en former une idée exacte? Et sur quoi fonderai-je une opinion équitable d'une personne que je n'ai point connue?

Certes, ce ne sont les rapports, les avis, et les témoignages qui nous manquent. Tout le monde parle à la fois. A peine expiré le grand homme, déjà, comme sa chair, s'altère assez brusquement l'idée qu'il donnait de soi-même. Les forces de la présence vivante manquent aussitôt. La mort laisse le mort sans défense contre ce qu'il parut être. Les craintes révérentielles s'évanouissent. Les langues se délient. Les souvenirs (et vous pensez bien que ce ne sont pas toujours les souvenirs les plus dignes) sortent des mémoires malicieuses; ils fourmillent, ils dévorent ce qu'ils peuvent atteindre de la valeur, des méhites, du caractère de l'absent. Il se fait une sorte d'abus de la vérité dont il n'est rien de plus trompeur que les parcelles. Chaque fragment du vrai ensemence l'esprit et l'excite à produire un personnage faux. Ne pouvant être intacte ni entière dans la tête des hommes, la vérité n'est jamais si pure ni si détachée des rancunes ou de l'amusement de ceux qui nous disent la posséder, qu'elle ne soit presque toujours d'une pieuse infidélité ou d'une fidélité calomnieuse.

Il n'est pas sans exemple qu'un illustre défunt soit livré à une nuée de dangereux amis et de démons anecdotiers qui nous instruisent de ce qu'il a fait de périssable. C'est en quoi les malheureux grands hommes, leur gloire, messieurs, les fait deux fois mortels: une fois ils le sont comme tous les hommes, et une autre fois comme grands. On dirait que ce qui importe à quelques-uns, c'est qu'un homme ait été moindre qu'on ne pensait. Mais considérons, au contraire, que ce qui importe à tous, c'est seulement ce qui augmente notre sentiment de la dignité des esprits et des lettres. Ne savons-nous pas qu'un homme est un homme et que si tout fût exactement *mis à nu*, personne n'oserait regarder personne, et par l'équivalence évidente des faiblesses, tout le monde en silence se contenterait tristement des siennes?

Laissons donc, messieurs, laissons s'apaiser peu à peu cette agitation inévitable qui s'empresse quelque temps autour des tombeaux, et distinguons tout l'or qui subsiste et étincelle dans une cendre.

Par les diverses perfections de ses ouvrages, par la variété et l'étonnante étendue de sa culture, par la suprême liberté de son esprit, votre confrère s'est avancé d'une condition modeste à la situation la plus éclatante, et d'une aube assez grise qui éclaira ses premiers temps, ses travaux, ses talents, son destin, le conduisirent enfin à un crépuscule magnifique.

Comme je songeais à cette existence si heureuse dans son progrès, à cette carrière parcourue si sûrement, d'une démarche tranquille et comme divertie par toutes choses sur la route, je me pris à comparer involontairement une vie si bien réussie à quelques-unes de ces vies fortunées qui se trouvaient possibles il y a fort longtemps, quand presque tous les hommes de pensée et même les hommes d'esprit étaient hommes d'Eglise, et que l'on voyait de prodigieuses élévations à partir des origines les plus simples par la seule vertu d'une prudente et savante intelligence. Des humanistes consommés, des métaphysiciens à peine voilés de théologie, des grands amateurs de Platon, de Lucrèce, ou de Virgile, des personnages semi-littéraires, semi-voluptueux, dévotement artistes, philosophiquement sacerdotaux, s'établissaient enfin dans la pourpre, entourés des plus beaux débris de l'antiquité païenne—singulières et séduisantes figures d'une époque disparue où l'Eglise pouvait souffrir de tels prélats d'une excessive délicatesse, et même d'une liberté incroyable dans les pensées.

Notre temps n'offre plus de ces facilités de développer à loisir les dons les plus délicats de l'esprit, à l'abri des misères du siècle, à l'ombre d'une immense institution. Il n'est plus de prébendes, plus d'abbayes. Il n'est plus de loisir dans la dignité. Notre société, tout exacte et matérielle, est au contraire assez remarquable par l'impuissance où elle se trouve de donner aux hommes de l'esprit une place nette et supportable dans sa gigantesque et grossière économie.

La situation était peut-être plus difficile encore à l'époque où votre confrère fit ses débuts dans la vie. Le siècle se montrait aussi incapable de renoncer à la multiplication des lettrés que de leur assigner des moyens d'existence. Que d'amertumes alors! que de tristesses! que de vies manquées! appelées à la plus haute culture et vouées, du même coup, au dénuement ou aux besognes les plus basses. Il arrivait que les diplômes fussent des garanties de malheur et des recommandations à la détresse. Jules Vallès, Alphonse Daudet nous ont laissé des livres véridiques et terribles sur ces misères cultivées. On dressait une quantité de jeunes hommes à ne savoir autre chose que ce dont presque personne n'avait besoin. On élevait de jeunes pauvres à des connaissances de pur luxe. On leur faisait sentir assez durement que les éléments les plus conscients d'une société en sont aussi les plus négligeables. Voilà ce que le futur auteur de Jean Servien a pu observer autour de soi au sortir de l'adolescence et qu'il a pu légitimement craindre pour soi-même. Il a pu redouter le sort d'un Vingtras ou d'un Petit Chose. Mais il était trop diversement doué, trop riche de connaissances générales, et d'ailleurs trop informé des choses de la vie par une sorte d'instinct qu'il en avait, pour ne pas céder comme distraitement à ce qu'il devait être un jour. Sa philosophie, qui était sa nature même, le préservait, d'ailleurs, des résolutions trop nettes comme des résignations prématurées. Il n'engage pas son avenir. Il ne s'enchaîne ni à une profession définitive, ni à une école; et s'il se laisse une fois lier, ce ne sera que des liens les plus aimables.

C'est qu'il y avait en lui une souplesse et une diversité essentielles. Il y avait du spirituel et du sensuel, du détachement et du désir, une grande et ardente curiosité traversée de profonds dégoûts, une certaine complaisance dans la paresse; mais paresse songeuse, paresse aux immenses lecture et qui se distingue mal de l'étude, paresse tout apparente, pareille au repos d'une liqueur trop enrichie de substance, et qui, dans ce calme, se fait mère de cristaux aux formes parfaites. Tant de connaissances accumulées, tant d'idées qu'il avait acquises n'étaient par quelquefois sans lui nuire extérieurement. Il étonnait, il scandalisait sans effort des personnes moins variées. Il concevait une quantité de doctrines qui se réfutaient l'une l'autre dans son esprit. Il ne se fixait que dans les choses qu'il trouvait belles ou délicieuses, et il ne retenait en soi que des certitudes d'artiste. Ses habitudes, ses pensées, ses opinions, la politique enfin qu'il a suivie se composaient dans une harmonie assez complexe qui n'a pas laissé d'émerveiller ou d'embarrasser quelques-uns. Mais qu'est-ce qu'un esprit de qui les pensées ne s'opposent aux pensées, et qui ne place son pouvoir de penser au-dessus de toute pensée? Un esprit qui ne se déjoue, et ne s'évade vivement de ses jugements à peine formés, et ne les déconcerte de ses traits, mérite-t-il le nom d'esprit? Tout homme qui vaut quelque chose dans l'ordre de la compréhension, ne vaut que par un trésor de sentiments contradictoires, ou que nous croyons contradictoires. Nous exprimons si grossièrement ce qui nous apparaît des autres humains qu'à peine nous semblent-ils plus divers et plus libres que nous-mêmes, aussitôt, nos paroles, qui essayent de les décrire, se contrarient, et nous attribuons à des êtres vivants une monstrueuse nature que nos faibles expressions viennent de nous construire.

Admirons au contraire cette grande capacité de contrastes. Il faut considérer avec une attention curieuse cette nature d'oisif, ce liseur infini, produire une œuvre considérable; ce tempérament assez voluptueux s'astreindre à l'ennui d'une tâche constante; cet hésitant, qui s'avance comme à tâtons dans la vie, procéder de sa modestie première, s'élever au sommet par des mouvements indécis; ce balbutiant, en venir à déclarer même violemment les choses les plus hardies; cet homme d'esprit, et d'un esprit si nuancé, s'accommoder d'être simplifié par la gloire et de revêtir dans l'opinion des couleurs assez crues; ce modéré par excellence, prendre parti, avec une si grande et étonnante vigueur, dans les dissensions de son temps; cet amateur si délicat, faire figure d'ami du peuple, et davantage, l'être de cœur et tout à fait sincèrement.

Je sais bien ce que l'on dit. On ne s'est pas privé de murmurer—et même d'articuler assez nettement—qu'il dut beaucoup de ses vertus actives, qui n'étaient point, semble-t-il, dans sa nature assez facile et négligente, à une tendre et pressante volonté, à une présence impérieusement favorable à sa gloire, qui veilla longtemps sur son travail, qui animait, dit-on, protégeait son esprit, le défendait d'être dissipé aux divertissements du monde, et qui obtint de lui qu'il tirât de soi-même tous les trésors qu'il eût aisément ignoré qu'il possédât, ou qu'il eût négligés de jour en jour, pour se réduire avec délices à jouir des beautés qui se trouvent tout accomplies aux bibliothèques et aux musées. Mais quand il serait vrai, et quand on pourrait établier qu'une assez grande partie de son œuvre fût demeurée en puissance sans la douce fermeté de cette affectueuse discipline, ce n'est que la malice toute seule qui pourrait en tirer avantage.

C'est le privilège des talents très précieux que d'exciter un tel instinct de leur défense, une affection aussi énergique, un zèle si soutenu pour une œuvre qui pourrait être, et qu'on sent profondément qu'il faut solliciter d'exister. N'est-ce donc rien que de s'attirer ce dévouement, si exact et si absolu qui n'eut enfin, pour sa suprême récompense, que le sentiment d'avoir servi à l'accomplissement d'une très belle destinée?

C'est pourquoi, messieurs, c'est vers l'œuvre accomplie qu'il faut diriger nos regards.

Cette œuvre existe et subsiste. Ses mérites sont aussi clairs qu'elle-même. Tout le monde connaît, tout le monde apprécie les perfections d'un art accompli jusqu'à l'exquise simplicité.

Mais voici cette circonstance singulière dans la fortune de cette œuvre, qu'elle a obtenu la gloire si répandue que vous savez; et davantage, une gloire presque populaire, par l'éminente séduction d'une forme très pure. Ceci est presque incroyable. C'est un phénomène sans exemple dans les lettres modernes, où l'on doit s'attendre toujours à ne voir accueillir par un immense public que les livres dont le fond dévore la forme, et dont les effets sont indépendants de la délicatesse des moyens.

Cette manière de prodige s'explique sans doute par les vertus de notre langage, profondément possédé, légèrement écrit par un auteur si expert. Il a démontré qu'il demeurait encore possible, dans notre langue, de faire sentir tout le prix d'une culture prolongée, et de combiner les héritages d'une suite ininterrompue d'écrivains admirables. Nos grands écrivains, messieurs, ne sont pas chez nous de grands isolés, comme il arrive en d'autres contrées; mais il existe en France une sorte d'atmosphère pour les lettres qui ne se trouve pas ailleurs, et qui fut toute favorable à votre confrère.

Lui-même n'était possible et guère concevable qu'en France dont il a pris le nom. Sous ce nom difficile à porter, et qu'il fallait tant d'espoir oser le prendre, il a conquis la faveur de l'univers. Il lui présentit, à la vérité, une France ayant les qualités spécieuses dont l'univers souffrirait qu'elle se contentât; qui lui plaisent, et qui ne le gênent ni ne l'inquiètent. Le monde ne hait point que nous nous réduisions à une fonction de pur agrément. Il nous supporterait comme un ornement de la terre. Il admet assez généreusement que nous représentions, dans un temps qui manque de grâce, un culte particulier des choses exquises, et que nous fassions figure d'un peuple d'artistes et d'amateurs satisfaits de leur sort, de leur ciel, de leur pays plein de beautés, comme si notre histoire toute récente, tout le sang répandu, toutes les marques de l'énergie la plus soutenue et d'une inébranlable et victorieuse volonté, un consentement général au sacrifice, d'immenses moyens improvisés en pleine tempête ne donnaient pas à cette nation le droit de parler aux puissances les plus avantageuses sur le ton le plus noble, le plus net, et même, le plus raisonnable.

Mais c'est d'une France assez différente, de la douce, distraite et délicate France, et presque d'une France un peu lasse et apparemment désabusée, que son illustre homonyme a peint élégamment l'image véritable et trompeuse. De cette France charmante, son esprit était une émanation très composée. Il avait fallu bien des traditions acquises et dissipées, bien des révolutions politiques ou morales, une acquisition accumulée d'expériences contradictoires pour former une tête si compréhensive et si incertaine. Un être de cette liberté suppose une antique et presque défaillante civilisation qui l'ait produit à l'extrême de son âge; qui lui ait donné à cueillir toutes les plus belles choses que les hommes ont faites et préservées. Il avait longuement respiré dans les livres les essences de la vie passée qui s'y mêlent à l'odeur de mort, et sa substance s'était imprégnée peu à peu du meilleur de ce que les siècles avaient déjà distillé de plus excellent. On le voit au jardin des racines françaises attirant à soi la plus odorante et la plus rare, et quelquefois la plus naïve des fleurs; combinant ses bouquets et ciselant ses haies; grand amateur de culture, pour qui l'art de la taille et de la greffe n'a point de secrets. Ainsi nourri de miel, visitant légèrement les vastes trésors de l'histoire et l'archéologie, comme il faisait ceux de la littérature, mais ne haïssant pas les douceurs, les facilités, les libertés de son temps, recevant les suffrages du public et des femmes, disposant à sa guise des amusements de la société, et ne se faisant faute, au milieu de tant d'avantages, en dépit de tant de délices, d'observer les contradictions, de saisir et de tourmenter les ridicules, il composait à l'aise ses ouvrages où circulait, sous les beautés d'un agrément perpétuel, un jugement assez sinistre; et il vivait supérieurement.

Ce n'était point un ingénu que mon illustre prédécesseur. Il ne s'attendait point que l'humanité fût dans l'avenir bien différente de ce qu'il paraît qu'elle fut jusqu'à nous-mêmes; ni que des merveilles tout inédites naquissent à présent de la ferveur des êtres et de la recherche de l'absolu. Il n'y avait pas en lui une foi invincible dans l'aventure de l'esprit; mais il avait tant lu et si bien lu qu'il s'était fait comme indépendant du présent et du futur par cette connaissance générale et intime de ce qu'il y a de lisible dans le passé, et même d'illisible.

Il est né dans les livres, élevé dans les livres, toujours, altéré de livres. Il connaît tout des livres, papier, type, formats, reliures, ce que l'on sait de l'imprimeur, de l'écrivain, des éditions, de leurs sources, de leur destin. Sa vie le fait successivement libraire, bibliothécaire, juge des livres, auteur; il est l'homme des livres.

En vérité, messieurs, je ne sais pas comment une âme peut garder son courage, à la seule pensée des immenses réserves d'écriture qui s'accumulent dans le monde. Quoi de plus vertigineux, quoi de plus confondant pour l'esprit que la contemplation

(*Continued on page 476*)

*The following columns, containing the "eulogy" on Anatole France demanded by custom of Paul Valéry as his successor to the Academy, are extracted from the booklet issued by the Paris publishing house, La Nouvelle Revue Française, and containing his address entire. They aroused wide comment in France as not mentioning in a single instance their subject by name.

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received. Many of them will be reviewed later.

Belles Lettres

A CHAUCER HANDBOOK. By R. D. FRENCH. Crofts. 1927. $2.

CHAUCER. By G. H. COWLING. Dutton. 1927. $2.

Mr. French's book is a sound and reliable compilation of the facts which an advanced student of Chaucer must take into account. Its chief preoccupation is with sources. In every case where scholars have discovered a definite source or a striking analogue to one of Chaucer's narratives, Mr. French has either printed it entire, translating foreign documents into English, or has provided a detailed summary. Thirty-eight pages, for example, are devoted to a summary of the long poem of Boccaccio which served as principal source for Chaucer's "Troilus and Criseyde." Within the limits that he has set for himself, the author has done his work well; but as these limits deliberately exclude any sort of literary appreciation either directly or by implication, the book takes on a rather forbidding look. But, as the Preface recognizes, "no one will read these pages who is not interested in forming judgments of his own upon the value of Chaucer's works."

Mr. Cowling's book is in every way disappointing. His literary criticism is dull and obvious; his scholarship—like that of many of his countrymen—leaves out of account much of the significant work which has been done by scholars on this side of the Atlantic. The volume contains very little that cannot better be read in other books.

Biography

THE OLDEST BIOGRAPHY OF SPINOZA. Edited with translation, introduction, annotations, etc. By A. WOLF. Lincoln MacVeagh. The Dial Press. 1927. $2.50.

Spinoza, the serene, detached, pure votary of reason, who bowed to no idols of cave, tribe, theatre, or market-place, has always seemed to many the most perfect example of the ideal philosopher—the philosopher *per se*. It is therefore fitting that one of the first fruits of the approaching two-hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of Spinoza's death should be biographical in character. "La Vie de Feu Monsieur de Spinosa," apparently written by one who knew him well, was first published anonymously in 1719, fourteen years later than the better known Dutch life by Colerus; but it was actually composed in 1678, twenty-two years earlier than Colerus's work: thus, aside from Spinoza's own Correspondence and a few scattered early references, it is the oldest and most important biographical source. The authorship has been ascribed both to one Saint-Glain and to Jean Maximilian Lucas, but the former's claim has now been virtually dismissed. The history of Lucas's work forms a curious chapter in biographical vicissitudes. Because of an intemperate attack on Christianity which was bound up with it in the first printed edition, the book was suppressed and disappeared from circulation. Owing to its later date, scholars generally supposed that it was based upon the work of Colerus, and the latter became the accepted source. Only during the last thirty years, with the discovery of numerous Lucas manuscripts, has the true situation come to light. Professor Wolf of the University of London has now made the first translation of the Lucas life into English, based upon a newly discovered and superior manuscript. His volume contains also the original life in French, together with the additions made to it in the first printed text, and translations of such additional biographical material as appeared during Spinoza's life time. Professor Wolf has done his work with admirable care, and the result is a valuable addition to Spinozistic literature. Every admirer of the great philosopher will wish to have it upon his shelf.

History

MISSISSIPPI PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES. Edited by Dunbar Rowland and A. G. Sanders. Jackson, Miss.: Press of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

A SYMPOSIUM ON THE PLACE OF DISCOVERY OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER BY HERNANDO DE SOTO. Edited by Dunbar Rowland. Jackson, Miss.: Printed for the Society.

IRELAND AND THE FOUNDATIONS OF EUROPE. By *Benedict Fitzpatrick*. Funk & Wagnalls.

THE PRESENT POSITION OF HISTORY. By *George Macaulay Trevelyan*. Longmans, Green.

Juvenile

(*See page 473 for Children's Bookshop*)

The late fall brought new consignments of children's books on widely different subjects. Among them we note: "The Uncle Wiggly Book," by Howard R. Garis (Appleton, $1.75), a cheerful compound of Br'er Rabbit with Æsop, brought up to date and squeezed into the choppy sentences that are supposed to fit children's intelligence. Next there is "The Children's Book of American Landmarks," by Lorinda Munson Bryant (Century, $2.50), a volume of fifty full page photographs with explanatory text, the term "landmark" apparently including anything "historic," from statues to old mansions. This book succeeds the author's other books of Celebrated Pictures, Celebrated Sculpture, etc. Sears publishes two books by Georgene Faulkner, "the Story Lady;" one large volume and one small one, "The Story Lady's Nursery Tales" ($2.50), and "The Story Lady's Christmas Stories" ($1.25), the first a pleasantly familiar list of nursery favorites from many lands, from our own Gingerbread Boy to a few unfamiliar stories from Norway or Italy, the latter a good collection for bed-time reading in the Christmas season. The Story Lady's style is agreeably simple if not exciting. The same publishers have brought out "Animal Stories for Children," by Tailer Andrews, a large volume of stories partly old and partly made for this collection, three of the latter kind by Joe Mills presenting good information about the Rocky Mountains not too thoroughly dissolved in narrative. Most of the tales are of the kind that exalt the noble animal. Another large volume also dedicated to the nobility of the beast, but not overly sentimentalized and quite straightforward in narrative, with an appendix on champion police dogs is "Cop the Chief of Police Dogs," by Reginald M. Cleveland (Milton Bradley, $2.50). Then there is "The Wonderful Gift," by Clara McKinney Edwards (Four Seas, $2), a story of two children who go to the moon. Doll Village, Rubber Man, Sugar Man—such names smack too much of the earth to fit the moon. One feels a fancy essentially rather mundane straining to produce too many and too odd adventures. Nevertheless, the book is lively and in places very pleasantly written. "Two Little Fellows," by Josephine Lawrence (Barse and Hopkins), one of a new series by the author of The Elizabeth Ann Series and The Linda La Series, is a "Growing up day by day" book. Just that, pleasantly done, vivacious—but why should children take time to read about what they had much better be doing? Only something that they can't do or couldn't think of seems worth an interruption of living.

Miscellaneous

THE ELEMENTS OF CRIME. By *Boris Brasol*. Oxford University Press. $5.

THE TAVERNS OF OLD ENGLAND. By *Henry Parr Maskell*. Day. $4.

THE CHELSEA SONG BOOK. Minton, Balch. $6.

GROVE'S DICTIONARY OF MUSIC AND MUSICIANS. Edited by H. C. Colles. Vol. III K-O. Macmillan. $7.50.

PROHIBITION. By *Herman Feldman*. Appleton. $2.

STAINED GLASS TOURS. By *Charles Hitchcock Sherrill*. Dodd, Mead.

A HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD. Longmans, Green. $7.50.

Poetry

PIT-HEAD POEMS. By FREDERICK C. BODEN. Dent. 1927. 3s.

No less a person than Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch has written a preface to these poems by a young miner. He is twenty-four years old. He is the son of a goods-porter. The influence of A. E. Housman upon him is even more apparent than Sir Arthur points out. Nevertheless we see warrant for the good things that Sir Arthur and Mr. Pocock say of him. There is a freshness and a certain magic in most of his poems. Considering the circumstances under which they were written they are highly remarkable. If Mr. Boden overcomes his main influence and secures the opportunity more deeply to study and compare his next book might well be a great advance. As it is he has laid hold of the fundamental principals of true poetry and his work has vigor and definite outline.

STEEP ASCENT. By JEAN STARR UNTERMEYER. Macmillan. 1927. $1.25.

The dedication of this book is poignant. So are many of the poems. There is intensity and passion in them. The workmanship is another matter. As we read Mrs. Untermeyer we feel that the very force germane to her impulsive expression of matters most personal must necessarily make her careless of what is called technique. Not always. There are extremely fortunate epithets and phrases in her work, but its power consists more often in her seizing upon a moment of deep actual experience than in an impeccable art in the interpretation of it. "Reply from the Citadel" is probably the best of the poems in this book, and here the criticism just voiced may abdicate. "Rescue," "According to Scripture," and "Rainy Night" are other fine efforts. The personality revealed is one of gallantry and intense feeling.

THE PALE WOMAN AND OTHER POEMS. By SARA BARD FIELD. New York: William Edwin Rudge. 1927.

This volume will cause no controversies among technicians. The verse is orthodox in pattern, traditional in tone, scarcely differing from the hundreds of volumes similarly assembled though not so excellently printed. But, beneath the undistinguished idiom, this poetry rises almost to the level of its exquisite format. Its very unassuming couplets are convincing because of their understatements.

Succor, indeed, he gives a host
And pity—but his own heart most.

Who can doubt that this is the poet speaking? And again:

Woman, why so pale and thin?
A swan and raven strive within.

It is in these facets of herself that Sara Bard Field wins us. Her volume begins tentatively enough. After the title-poem, there are several lapses; thin though the volume is, it would have been strengthened by sterner self-criticism. But with the second section, the poetry begins to mount. "Not Dante Only," "Successful Pessimist," "Sum," lift steadily, and the volume finds its natural climax in the concluding two poems, "My City" and "Toward Space." We quote the first of these:

Tenderness and pity
And love alone
Shall build my city,
Stone on stone.
Those beneath a steeple
Of whirling air
Shall be my people
Praying there.
Who will make love cover
Star and sod,
He shall be my lover
And my God.

If only for these twelve lines, Sara Bard Field deserves a place among our unaffected and spontaneous singers.

A STRANGER IN HEAVEN. By HAROLD VINAL. Vinal. 1927.

The outstanding quality in Mr. Vinal's new volume is the author's growth. No longer echoing the fashions of the moment, no longer clasping pale hands and tearful couplets with the gesture of Edna St. Vincent Millay, Mr. Vinal has achieved an accent of his own. From much that is still wordy and even fumbling, there emerges a personality hesitant, vague, a bit precious, but nevertheless a personality.

The earlier "Nor Youth Nor Age" pointed the way to this, repudiating the cloying sweetmeats of "White April." But a new concision, a more direct concern with the idea, and less preoccupation with trappings is evident. Here is the neatly manipulated sonnet whose smooth progression does not intrude itself beyond the rights of the medium. Here are lyrics as candid as "Suspension," "Banquet," "Siesta on a Hill." If the ghost of Emily Dickinson haunts lines like:

Make the bed I covet
Punctual and deep;
Let no mole or lizard
Interrupt my sleep,

and the inflections of smaller mystics can be heard in "Clarion" and others, the descent into prettiness is rarely as abrupt

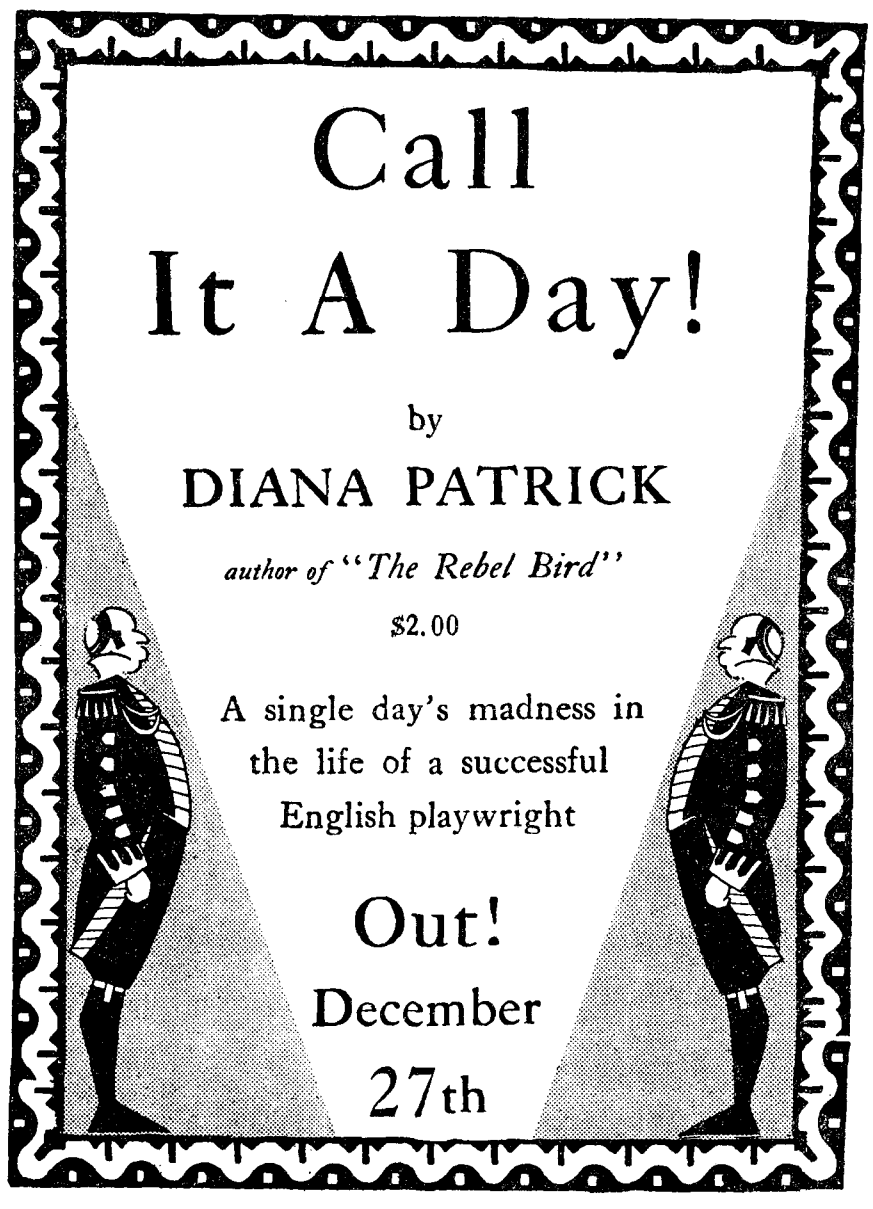
The gentle doe holds lyric ritual
With leaf and branch . . . .

For the most part, Mr. Vinal avoids the too graceful entry, the sweeping exit. His purely pictorial sonnets are good; his macabre bits are even better. "Two in a House" and "Waiting Coach" would distinguish any volume; "Bread of Life" and "Widow" in their limited greys surpass all the purple patches in this or Mr. Vinal's previous books. As an example of delicacy and dispatch, we quote "Waiting Coach":

The coach is waiting and I must descend,
The lackey holds the door, the driver waits;
Farewell is over and the final friend
Departed through the portal and the gates.
The butler, Silence, hovers in the hall,
Holding my tall hat and my polished cane;
The journey may be problematical—
I go, but doubt if I return again.

The horses plunge outside, Time holds the whip,
I must be off before the day is here;
The road is waiting and the endless trip,
Another world, another hemisphere.
What is the forecast of the almanac?
No matter, Sirs; do not expect me back.

It is with such work that Mr. Vinal can face a new audience without pretense or apology.



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The Wits' Weekly

Conducted by EDWARD DAVISON

Competition No. 12. A prize of fifteen dollars is offered for an imaginary review (not exceeding 500 words) of a recently discovered "Alice Up the Chimney," by Lewis Carroll. The review should contain at least two quotations. (Entries should reach *The Saturday Review* office, 25 West 45th Street, New York City, not later than the morning of January 2.)

Competition No. 13. A prize of fifteen dollars is offered for the best sonnet on Mayor Thompson beginning with the line "Lincoln, thou shouldst be living at this hour." (Entries should reach *The Saturday Review* office not later than the morning of January 9.)

THE TENTH COMPETITION

A prize of fifteen dollars was offered for the most original Nursery Rhyme for a Twentieth Century child.

WON BY E. MURRAY
(New York City)

THE PRIZE WINNING NURSERY RHYME

Woolworths, Woolworths,
What have you for sale?
Little china tea sets,
A hammer and a nail,
Neckties and hairpins
And rings beyond compare,
Little combs of celluloid
To comb your short brown hair.
Some of them are five cents,
Some of them are ten;
Some are for the ladies
And some for gentlemen.

THE quality of this week's entries was unusually high. Out of nearly a hundred nursery rhymes, at least twenty or thirty were good enough to furnish a symposium which most publishers of children's books would probably be glad to produce with suitable illustrations. Gertrude Klein, K. K. Bayles, and "Benn Gunn" wrote the best of a number of skits which, though no doubt applicable to the modern nursery, are not exactly the kind of thing one would teach even an advanced infant to lisp. "Lullaby" is less of a nursery rhyme than "Shush-a Bye, Baby!" but both are excellent and must be printed.

LULLABY
By K. K. BAYLES

Denatured bread, synthetic fruit,
Thy food untouched by human hands
We offer thee, all sterilized,
To stimulate thy growing glands.
(Sleep, Little Problem, sleep!)

A purring car (don't ask for puss!),
A cigarette, a six-foot shelf
We give thee on thy natal day
So thou may be thy Own True Self.
(Sleep, Little Problem, sleep!)

Thy budding brain shall guide thy sire—
An Introvert thou shalt not be;
We humble parents hereby set
Thy Libido forever Free!
(Sleep, Little Problem, sleep!)

SHUSH-A-BYE, BABY!
By BENN GUNN

"Found in a cabbage leaf—"
Hear how they talk!
"Rabbits lay Easter eggs—"
Have I a squawk?

"Sure! there's a Santa Claus—"
Nursie knows why.
George and the cherry tree;
Parents don't lie.

Shush-a-bye, baby, to
Fairy tale drool;
Then to meet Jonah in
Nice Sunday school.

Build me more castles of
Faith on such rocks—
Bye and bye Baby will
Hand back some shocks!

E. M. S. Lockwood wrote more briefly in a similar strain.

Hush-a-bye, baby, life's just a blight,
Man is a monkey, Barnum was right;
Ma's gone a voting, Dad's buying clothes,
But the name of the lady nobody knows.

At least half the entries dealt with modern disillusion in the nursery. Homer M. Parsons wore his modernism with a difference. His jingling music has the orthodox ring.

Rum, come a ring tang!
Saxophone Joe
Poppled all the keys,
But the thing wouldn't blow.
Stop the dance! Stop the dance!
Give the kid a drink—
And let him play the banjo
Pinkety-pank, pink!

There was an echo of R. L. S. in Martlet's tune.

Ben Franklin was a brave man,
He flew a kite of silk;
He harnessed the lightning
To warm my supper milk.

But her skilful little poem was rather too urbane to satisfy my prejudices. "Thum" might have taken one of her rhymes out of any old, odd collection of such things.

There was an old man
Who lived in a flat;
He never could think
What he'd done with his hat.

He looked down the fire escape
And in the day bed,
And finally found it
On the top of his head.

Her second entry, beginning

The milkman comes with bottles,
The ice-man comes with tongs,
On the mailman's back is a heavy sack
And none of them sings any songs

was equally good. Phoebe Scribble wrote even more pleasingly.

Little for a nickel! Little for a dime!
Nothing for a penny that is worth a fellow's time!
Away goes a quarter! Away goes two!
It takes a mighty clever guy to make a dollar do!

But the final honors were reserved for Elspeth and E. Murray. Elspeth's entry is, I think, less of a nursery rhyme than Miss Murray's, so the prize goes to the latter for the best of her half dozen entries. Her poem we have printed above; the other follows.

There once was a boy who wouldn't stay down.
He wanted to travel above the town;
And his sister (you know how sisters are)
Would only go in a subway car.

For years and years they went this way,
She in the dark, he in the day;
She grew quite pale and developed a frown
While he grew bent from looking down.

Then Fate in the form of a traffic strike
Hit brother and sister both alike.
They learned to live on the surface and
Walked there happily, hand in hand.

She was rosy as she could be
And he was straight as a Christmas tree.
But he will pale and she will frown
If you mention "up" or you mention "down."

ELSPETH.

Competitors are advised to read carefully the rules printed below:

RULES

(Competitors failing to comply with rules will be disqualified.)

1. Envelopes should be addressed to "The Competitions Editor, *The Saturday Review of Literature*, 25 West 45th street, New York City." The number of the competition (e.g., "Competition 1") must be written on the top left-hand corner. 2. All MSS. must be legible—typewritten if possible—and should bear the name or pseudonym of the author. Competitors may offer more than one entry. MSS. cannot be returned. 3. *The Saturday Review* reserves the right to print the whole or part of any entry.

Valery's Discourse

(*Continued from page* 474)

des murs cuirassés et dorés d'une vaste bibliothèque; et qu'y a-t-il aussi de plus pénible à considérer que ces bancs de volumes, ces parapets d'ouvrages de l'esprit qui se forment sur les quais de la rivière, ces millions de tomes, de brochures échoués sur les bords de la Seine, comme des épaves intellectuelles rejetées par le cours du temps qui s'en décharge et se purifie de nos pensées? Le cœur défaille en présence du nombre des œuvres, que dis-je? du nombre même des chefs-d'œuvre. . . . L'idée d'écrire s'assimile à l'idée d'ajouter à l'infini, et le goût de la cendre vient aux lèvres.

Dans cette vallée de Josaphat, dans cette multitude confrontée, le génie le plus rare trouve ses pairs, se confont à la foule de ses émules, de ses précurseurs, de ses disciples. Toute nouveauté se dissout dans les nouveautés. Toute illusion d'être originale se dissipe. L'âme s'attriste et imagine, avec une douleur toute particulière mêlée d'une profonde et ironique pitié, ces millions d'êtres armiés de plumes, ces innombrables agents de l'esprit, dont chacun se sentit, à son heure, créateur indépendant, cause première, possesseur d'une certitude, source unique et incomparable, et que voici maintenant avili par le nombre, perdu dans le peuple toujours accru de ses semblables, lui qui n'avait vécu si laborieusement et consumé ses meilleurs jours que pour se distinguer éternellement. Par l'effet de cette écrasante présence, tout s'égalise; tout se détruit dans une coexistence insupportable. Il n'est point de thèse qui n'y trouve son antithèse, point d'affirmation qui n'y soit réfutée, point de singularité non multipliée, point d'invention qui ne soit effacée d'une autre et dévorée par une suivante, de sorte que tout enfin semble se passer comme si, les combinaisons de nos syllabes devant toutes se produire, l'acte final de ces myriades d'êtres libres et autonomes équivalait à l'opération d'une machine.

Votre docte et subtil confrère, messieurs, n'a pas ressenti ce malaise du grand nombre. Il avait la tête plus solide. Pour se préserver de ces dégoûts et de ce vertige statistique, il n'eut pas besoin de lire fort peu. Loin de se trouver opprimé, il était excité de cette richesse, dont il tirait tant d'enseignements et des conséquences excellentes pour la conduite et la nourriture de son art.

On n'a pas manqué de le reprendre assez durement et naïvement d'être informé de tant de choses et de ne pas ignorer ce qu'il savait. Comment veut-on qu'il fît? Que faisait-il qui ne s'est toujours fait? Il n'est rien de plus neuf que l'espèce d'obligation d'être entièrement neufs que l'on impose aux écrivains. Il faut une bien grande et intrêpide humilité, de nos jours, pour oser s'inspirer d'autrui. On observe plutôt assez souvent une contrainte, une volonté trop sensible de priorité, et, en somme, je ne sais quelle affectation d'une virginité qui n'est pas toujours délicieuse. Ni Virgile, ni Racine, ni Shakespeare, ni Pascal ne se sont privés de nous laisser voir qu'ils avaient lu. Mais dédaignant l'opinion récente et regardant de plus prés, il est facile d'éclaircir cette petite question, qui n'est point question d'esthétique, mais tout au plus question d'éthique, car c'est une question de vanité. On n'a jeté tant de discrédit sur l'antique et le respectable usage de combiner le mien et le tien que par la confusion des deux idées.

"Something new in the art of the 'portraitist' is likely to appear in Shane Leslie's forthcoming 'The Skull of Swift,' in which biography the author argues that Swift was a man without a soul," says *John O'London's Weekly*. "Many strange qualities of the eighteenth century's 'Gloomy Dean' are analyzed; the love story of Swift and Stella is told, and Mr. Leslie is said to combine a scholar's accuracy with a novelist's power of imaginative interpretation."

Making Revolution Pay

HOPPLA, WIR LEBEN. By ERNST TOLLER. Postdam: Gustav Kiepenheuer Verlag. 1927.

Reviewed by H. W. PUCKETT

THERE are various ways of becoming a popular poet, one of the most effective being to get imprisoned for a popular cause. With just what strings Ernst Toller might have strung his lyre if he had not been caught in the contracting coils of law and order which had been somewhat loosened by the revolution, I don't know; but after he had put in five years in prison for his indiscretion, it would have required a stronger will than his to refuse the crown of martyrdom which the proletariat has ever since insisted on his wearing. He has functioned as a literary protest. "Hinkemann," "Masse-Mensch," "Maschinenstürmer" have been one "j'accuse" after another, and now he repeats himself once more in "Hoppla, Wir Leben" which is playing to full houses here in Berlin.

A look at the fifty *dramatis personæ* might make us apprehensive of mental strain if we did not know that we are not supposed to take characters seriously in this sort of drama. Their relations to one another are quite casual even when they cohabit without the approval of society. We do not have to con their lines to classify them. They flit by like the flaws in the old nickelodeon films. The author courts this comparison by relying on movie technique: he actually projects pictures on the screen for twenty minutes before the opening of the play and then again in between scenes, to motivate the action and to tell what is happening outside the play. He spurns none of the aids of modern science. Indeed, he employs a scheme which should forever solve the presentation of Goethe's "Götz" or of the many-scened Shakespearean plays: a cross section of a five-story hotel offers him opportunity to present practically simultaneously enactments in seven different places. In order that we may not have the confusion of a three ring circus, however, the lights are turned off and the voices silenced in all but the one room on which he wishes our attention focused. This trick, not original with Toller, is used quite extensively in this play, notably in showing the several prisoners' cells at the end. Let no one say that "Hoppla, Wir Leben" is not up-to-date: radio squawks throughout it, and even television reveals the Mississippi flood (in which, naively enough, Chicago is threatened with destruction).

Be it said that this machine gun tempo is the aim of Herr Toller. It is contrived to show the inhumanness of our civilization and incidentally to confuse further the already addled head of the leading charactor, Karl Thomas. This unfortunate young man was one of a half dozen prisoners sentenced to death for participation in the revolution. In a prelude—the most effective part of the play—we are shown the group about to attempt a break for liberty, when at the critical moment word is brought that they are pardoned. This unexpected relief after ten days of waiting for the firing squad, deprives Thomas of his wits. Eight years he spends in an asylum to be then pronounced cured and let out into this year of our Lord 1927. He finds the world topsy-turvy. The revolution is forgotten. His comrades are no longer fire-eaters, they counsel patience. One expeditious soul among them has become minister, ruler of the land. Thomas pokes about in the new-old order, tries to put the puzzle together, fails, and then thinks to cause another convulsion in the state by killing the minister. The minister is actually shot by a fanatic of the conservative party, but Thomas is arrested and, in disgust at the irony of it all, hangs himself in his cell just before the discovery of the real murderer. At least, thus does he end in Berlin. In Leipzig, I am told, he is allowed to live on and be puzzled.

Aside from its catchy machinery, "Hoppla, Wir Leben" relies for its appeal on its social irony. But this slant on life does not mean anything in particular from a writer who simply reaffirms at intervals that he does not understand life and has Thomas put his neck in a noose for much the same reason that Hinkemann hanged himself years ago. The artistry of the play is as weak as its philosophy. I say nothing about the obscenities, the homosexuality, gratuitous vulgarities which he allows himself, no doubt under the impression that he is being real. Let them pass as an excrescence of the day, a pimple on Father Time's nose. But there is not a spark of poetry about the play; no illusion in this conglomeration of spot lights and radioed banalities.

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The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the selection of books and questions of like nature should be addressed to MRS. BECKER, c/o *The Saturday Review.*

H. M. A., Cambridge, Mass., asks what books will serve as a guide in opening up Boston and its vicinity to a new comer.

IF a true Bostonian can envisage anything so summary as "doing" the city n a week, C. R. Athearn's "Boston in Seven Days"—one of a series published by McBride in which various cities here and abroad are polished off in this space of ime—is far from being as flippant as the itle might imply. It is a good little guide, nore detailed than the one so long published by Ginn, "Boston: a Guide to the City and Vicinity," which was brought to date and distributed to the N. E. A. visitors in 1922. For one who is to live here, there are M. A. De Wolfe Howe's 'Boston, the Place and the People" (Macmillan) which is more than just a guide, nd the same author's "Boston Common: Scenes from Four Centuries," originally a Riverside Press limited edition, now obtainable also in a regular edition from Houghton Mifflin. Henry Cabot Lodge's 'Boston" is in the "Historic Towns" series published by Longmans, Green. The works of M. C. Crawford must not be omitted from any collection of Bostoniana; the most popular is "Old Boston Days and Ways" Little, Brown), which is pleasantly illustrated. Mrs. J. T. Fields' diaries of social Boston form the basis of Mrs. Howe's Memories of a Hostess" (Little, Brown).

A. R., Jersey City, asks for a book for a layman on the new psychology, to inform him upon the new ideas as to the springs of human conduct.

'ABOUT OURSELVES: A Psychology for Normal People," by H. A. Overstreet (Norton), seems to have been written with such a demand as this in mind. It may well revive in a tired mind n interest in the conduct of living, for shows how much our traits have to do with our lives. It was tried out at the New School for Social Research, and the criticisms of the group have been directly helpful. "That Mind of Yours," by Daniel Bell Leary (Lippincott), could be given to any reader who takes an intelligent interest in the workings of his own brain nd body, however young he may be.

V. *W. G., Deland, Florida,* tells the group in search of womanless books ot to neglect "The voyage of the Martin Conner," and *C. H. L., Potsdam, N. Y.* ells them not to miss Vida Scudder's "Brother John" (Little, Brown), saying that here are no ladies in it and that it is a ne piece of writing. *J. B. H., Newton, Jan.,* adds "Blind Corner," by Dornford Yates (Minton, Balch) saying that he has ead it twice and that it seems to him the utstanding adventure story of its type of ie past several years.

V. L., New Orleans, La., who is much interested in novels and stories of the Basque country, asks if the stories of this region by Eleanor Mercein Kelly have been collected in book form, as she thinks this would make a charming gift.

I DON'T know about the stories, but Mrs. Kelly (Eleanor Mercein) has a ew novel, just out, called "Basquerie" Harper), that would certainly fill these equirements.

). A., New York, asks for a choice of gifts for a reader who likes "books out of the ordinary."

ONCE more Don Marquis dips into his newspaper files: after "The Old oak's History of the World" and "The Almost Perfect State" (Doubleday, Page) omes now "Archy and Mehitabel." Like Russian refugee selling off the family wels, he thus manages to keep the publisher from the door. I am thereby richer or the gem of this collection that most I oveted, the complete adventures of Mehitabel the Cat. There is a certain resience about Mehitabel that would make er invaluable as an animal ancestor: I'd noose her ahead of all the pithecanthrouses in creation. This book includes even ie incomparable dance with which Mehitabel keeps from freezing: this alone ould make "Archy and Mehitabel" Doubleday, Page) head my list.

I am surprised to find that everybody is eading Erskine's "Adam and Eve" (Bobbs, Merrill), it is so clearly caviare to the eneral. I can only believe that the general is getting very little out of it. This perhaps fortunate, else we should have any young women talking like Lilith ithout her brains, just as the earlier novel set so many middleaged ladies acting like Helen of Troy without her beauty. Indeed, a mortal taking either for model should reflect that both these ladies were immortals. But however many may be reading "Adam and Eve," it will be appreciated only by those who like books out of the ordinary, so down it goes.

Really something should be done about the way Robert Nathan's books are being kept out of general circulation by his cult. Now and again he gives them one—not always up to the standard of "Jonah," but at least as charming as "The Fiddler of Barley." They lap them up and say not a word: they do not lend or even give them to friends, fearing the receiver might not appreciate the boon, and thus weaken their admiration for him. Sometimes a young man may use one to test in advance the taste of a possible fiancée, but that happens too seldom to count in circulation. The result of this greediness is that Robert Nathan has probably the smallest and the most satisfied public of any American novelist. The time has come to break through this charmed circle in the interest of the general reader; there must be several more of these who should not be deprived of the new one, "The Woodcutter's House" (Bobbs-Merrill), a story that can be kind, sad, and funny all at once.

Or there is Sacheverell Sitwell's "All Summer in a Day" (Doran), not because it is by one of a trio whose works are practically prescribed for the knowing, but because—even if only a Sitwell could have written it— it is in itself a little life, in which it is possible to lose one's self to the point of passing subway stations. Or—this list jumps about so—there is Glenway Wescott's "The Grandmothers" (Harper), the best approach to an understanding of America yet made through a novel; whose method, slow and of necessity repetitious, calls for reading one chapter at a time, on no account rushing through at a sitting. There is "Gentlemen Johnny Burgoyne," by F. J. Hudleston (Bobbs-Merrill)—there's a biography out of the ordinary for you, bubbling with high spirits, and to say that about a book two-thirds military history is to call it extraordinary indeed. There is the brilliant common sense of Elmer Davis's contemporary criticisms in "Show Window" (Day)—surely such common sense is out of the common run. Oh, why not give him "The Winged Horse," by Auslander and Hill (Doubleday, Page) even if it were intended for young people? Older ones have already taken to this history of poetry through the lives of poets, and thereby treated themselves to a belated Spring. If he has the least interest in poetry already, or the least care for the Middle Ages, let him have Helen Waddell's "The Wandering Scholars" (Houghton Mifflin), the roving life of the *vagantes* and their poetry exquisitely translated, a book whose scholarship is so gaily worn that only another scholar would appreciate its richness. Or, taking one last jump back into the present, there is Ben Ames Williams's "Splendor" (Dutton), a fine full-length novel for which his followers have been waiting, and—did they but know it—the American reading public as well, for it is a book that had to be written.

K. McC., Baltimore, Md., asks for books on the causes of the Civil War.

THE discussion of this subject takes up a good part of the middle section of Charles and Mary Beard's "Rise of American Civilization" (Macmillan), and for the everyday reader this statement of the points at issue will be not only enlightening but possibly somewhat surprising. For works devoted in great part to antecedent conditions of the War of Secession, F. E. Chadwick's "Causes of the Civil War" (Harper) is especially good for its exposition of the military and naval situation: it is one of the "American Nation" series, which may be recommended as a whole. J. W. Burgess's fine study of "The Civil War and the Constitution" (Scribner, 2 small volumes) goes from 1859 to the close of the war. The little volume in the Home University Library (Holt), Frederic L. Paxson's "The Civil War," emphasizes economic causes. The most important general history of the period is James Ford Rhodes's "History of the Civil War" (Macmillan).

An Indiana lawyer asks for a list of books covering "what might be called the literature of the law," and naming, as examples of the sort of book meant, Pound's "Common Law," and Carter's "Law: its Origin, Growth and Function."

THIS need, which the correspondent says is felt by all lawyers, has already been met by Frederick C. Hicks, Law Librarian of Columbia University. In his book, "Materials and Methods of Legal Research," published by the Lawyers Coöperative Publishing Co., Rochester, N. Y., there is a list of this kind on pages 47-50. As the book is itself a valuable addition to a lawyer's library, I do not repeat from the list here.

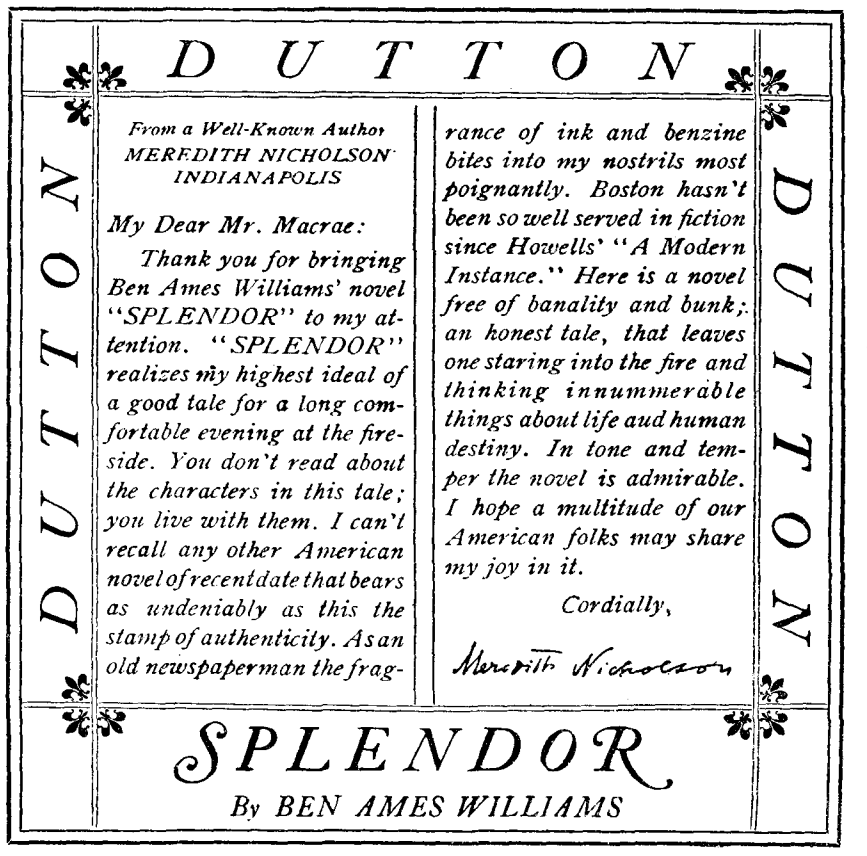
ADVICE continues to come from readers to readers. *R. S. B. L., Chicago,* adds to the list of "absorbing journals of women, displaying their psychology," Ethel Smyth's "Impressions that Remained," of which there is a cheap edition as well as the better one, both in two volumes and both published by Longmans, Green. She calls it one of the most interesting of this type that she has ever read—The ripples of the Belloc article on "Vathek" have not yet subsided: *T. Y. L., New York,* tells me that a year before the appearance of the article, he picked up on the Fourth Avenue (for "a long bit") an edition of "Vathek" published in the "Little Library" (Methuen, 1901), with Beckford's own notes, Dr. Henley's and the editor's—E. Denison Ross's—editions, and a portrait of William Beckford, Esq., of Fonthill, from a painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds. He calls the edition "really a little gem." *N. M. W., New Haven, Conn.,* says that "The Mystery," by White, and Robin's "The Magnetic North," should be added to the list of novels without women, and also the new story, "The Tramp," by "Townend." *L. H. S., Chicago Normal College,* adds to the growing list of books on archaeology for children, not only Jennie Hall's "Buried Cities" (Macmillan)—everyone adds that—but the following as well:—"The Boy Through the Ages," by Dorothy M. Stuart (Harrap), well-told, excellent illustrations. "The Age of Discovery," volume 1 in "The Story of America Series," by Ramon Coffman, issued by the F. A. Owen Publishing Co., Danville, N. Y., 1926. The first chapter is on American Indian archaeology, a subject too often neglected. She adds, "Frederic A. Kummer in his three books of history stories, 'First Days of Man,' 'of Knowledge,' and 'of History,' all published by Doran, has some archaeology, and Dr. Breasted, whose 'Conquest of Civilization' is written for high school students, is so beautifully clear in style that children in elementary school can learn a great deal. I read Breasted's 'Ancient History' to my son when he was in fourth and fifth grades, and he loved it." I hope all these reports will arouse parents to some similar action: if you yourself like to read about the beginnings of things, why not credit even a young child with some interest in beginnings, and try out a book like this once in a while? Or at least try telling it over as a bedtime story? To the "books about children for grown-ups," *A. W. J., Jacksonville, Ill.,* adds "Children's Sayings," all vouched for, made by "that gentle and wondrously chivalrous child-lover, the late William Canton: my copy was sent to me by Mr. Canton a few days before his death." The little book is published by Harrap at one and six. Since this list appeared one of the very best books of this kind has appeared, "Mrs. Chatterbox and her Family," by Louise Connolly (Macmillan), the story of a "smart child" just after the Civil War in Washington. Begin as I did with the chapter about the near-sighted cat and you will like me lug the book about from train to train till you have laughed out the last word.

THE American-Scandinavian Foundation, 25 W. 45th street, N. Y., is one of the best equipped and generally useful of the organizations for promoting international understanding by spreading knowledge of literature, the arts, and other manifestations of the national genius. I have often been helped in my work by this society. *R. W. H., Green Bay, Wis.,* was especially interested in the reply to *D. C. M., Cleveland,* about novels in the "new manner" and based on the new psychology. He says that I should have suggested that he read Glenway Wescott's "The Apple of the Eye" for "the psychological effect of life upon the soul of a sensitive and questioning adolescent boy. We speak glibly of psychological novels when many times we mean nothing but 'thought-provoking.' In that sense any novel worth reading is psychological. In that sense Wescott's new novel, 'The Grandmothers' (Harpers), belong in the psychological class: I think it an exquisite piece of work." I was one of a great many people who should have read "The Apple of His Eye" when it came out, and who missed it then; I have again and again been twitted of this by more fortunate readers. No doubt the award of the Harper Prize to "The Grandmothers" will send readers of this remarkable new novel to the one that precedes it in time as well as in time of writing.

The Living Age, in commenting upon the German publishing season, has the following to say:

"With an output of over thirty-one thousand different books in the calendar year of 1925, German publishers are congratulating themselves that their industry has satisfactorily weathered the financial storms of the last few years. These figures, though hardly fresh, seem to be the latest available, and according to a learned contributor to the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung,* prove that the business can be conducted advantageously on the Rentenmark basis. In 1924, for instance, only twenty-four thousand titles appeared, and in 1908, with pre-war production at its height, the average price of a German book was three and a half marks. This figure has now risen to four marks, seventy-five pfennigs, but the increase compares favorably with similar advances in England and America.

Thanks to paper bindings and more direct distribution, German novels now sell at an average price of three and a half marks a copy. The cheapest books are educational texts and courses in stenography, which cost on an average one mark, fifty-four pfennigs apiece. Philosophic works generally come as high as six marks, and art books, with such illustrations as only Germans can produce, average slightly over twenty marks. Biographical and historical works that rarely cost less than four dollars in the States, and frequently run up to ten, average six marks and a half. One might suppose that the practical as well as the intellectual superiority of German publishing would challenge intelligent imitators elsewhere."


DUTTON
From a Well-Known Author
MEREDITH NICHOLSON
INDIANAPOLIS
My Dear Mr. Macrae:
Thank you for bringing Ben Ames Williams' novel "SPLENDOR" to my attention. "SPLENDOR" realizes my highest ideal of a good tale for a long comfortable evening at the fireside. You don't read about the characters in this tale; you live with them. I can't recall any other American novel of recent date that bears as undeniably as this the stamp of authenticity. As an old newspaperman the fragrance of ink and benzine bites into my nostrils most poignantly. Boston hasn't been so well served in fiction since Howells' "A Modern Instance." Here is a novel free of banality and bunk; an honest tale, that leaves one staring into the fire and thinking innummerable things about life and human destiny. In tone and temper the novel is admirable. I hope a multitude of our American folks may share my joy in it.
Cordially,
Meredith Nicholson
DUTTON
SPLENDOR
By BEN AMES WILLIAMS

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Points of View

An Old Controversy

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

May I be permitted to express the reasons for the displeasure which I felt in reading the article With Sherman To The Sea which appeared in your issue of November 26.

In a review of the book, "Marching With Sherman," Mr. James Truslow Adams tends to extenuate Mr. Sherman's deliberate warfare upon non-combatants. His method of doing so is distinctly displeasing.

Speaking of Mr. Sherman's aide, whose notes and letters furnished the material for the book, Mr. Adams assures us that he was "an eminently humane man" but says: "He began to realize that war is war, that a humane solution was a speedy solution, and that ruthless destruction of the enemy's essential property tended to that end."

This view Mr. Adams regards as raising the question: "Should we be seemingly *inhumane* for the moment in order to be really humane in the long run?" (The italics are the critic's.) Now this is neither the simple, if blunt, logic of the Athenian envoys to the inhabitants of Melos, nor the sincere, if mistaken, humanitarianism of those who advocate disarmament. Historically, it might be the illegitimate offspring of the two. Neither of the two views mentioned can *per se* be offensive to the senses, however disastrous its consequences may be. But I submit that to attempt to combine the two is offensive to the senses as well as disastrous in consequences. It is offensive because it recalls the 1917 complex. One is suspicious of Mr. Adam's idea of warring "to end war." It seems that we have all heard that before somewhere.

With reference to Mr. Sherman himself, he says: "Of his own humanity there was no doubt. Nevertheless, his aide seemed to detect an increasing lack of real effort to prevent the 'inevitable' and innumerable 'stragglers' from inflicting wanton injury." If this is logic, it is logic of a peculiar and sprightly kind.

So gifted, Mr. Adams should do well in the next war, if he is not within the age of conscription. By the way, that is a blunt word, "conscription;" would Mr. Adams prefer "enlistment *en masse*"?

ARTHUR SHELDON.

Cambridge, Mass.

Enshrining Error

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

In these days of meticulous investigation as well as of reawakened interest in many phases of our earlier national life (or in characters of quaintness or humor of other nationalities), it is astonishing to find erroneous statements of fact reprinted as if they had never been questioned or disproved.

In the re-issue this year of Mason Locke Weems's exhilarating and oft-bedrubbed "Life of Washington" as Volume II of An American Bookshelf, Mr. Mark Van Doren retails two such errors. For in his editor's note he repeats the assertion that Weems was "neither a parson" nor "formerly rector of Mount Vernon Parish." Had the editor taken the pains to look up Mr. Lawrence C. Wroth's brochure on this subject—a work which has been on the bookshelves of many public libraries for nearly twenty years—he would have learned that Weems was ordained both deacon and priest in the church of England on two separate days of September, 1784, by the Bishop of Chester and the Archbishop of Canterbury respectively. This insinuation against Weems's integrity, of claiming to be a clergyman when he was not, has persisted in many quarters for the past eighty years, unjustly throwing grave discredit upon the parson. But one might have supposed that Mr. Wroth had forever laid low so particularly evil an imputation.

Again, as to Weems's rectorship of Mount Vernon Parish, though he was never permanently installed in any of the four churches of Truro parish, he officiated at one of these—Pohick church—for three periods, during 1801, 1802, and 1817. Moreover, his name was suggested as assistant to a second church in that parish, at Alexandria, Virginia.

It was presumably as a bait to the purchaser that Weems added this claim of rectorship upon the title-page of his "Washington," seven years after its first issue. And though we may perceive and smile over his tactics in making such a claim, in view of the facts above one cannot justly label it an untruth. For Mount Vernon lies midway between these two churches, and Washington had attended Pohick church quite regularly until October, 1788, serving on its vestry, and choosing the site for its rebuilding, while from there he transferred his interest to Christ church, Alexandria.

Under the circumstances, one must conjecture that the editor wrote his note without a re-examination of the data at hand since the publication of his brother's chapter on Weems in the "Cambridge History of American Literature." Furthermore, when he states that the book had met "a natural and deserved death"—though actually its publishers had found it profitable to reprint it every few years, and in two editions so late as 1918 and 1921, one is more than ever puzzled. If so deservedly and, in Mark Twain's phrase, so unexaggeratedly dead, why resuscitate it?

Since Weems's highly-colored account of Washington is now to be given a further circulation, even though introduced as a corpse, with such damning obsequies, it seems only fair to clear its author's good name from these two unsavory accusations. At the same time one may perhaps be permitted to point out that in so able a writer as Mr. Van Doren one had been led to expect a greater scrupulousness both in scholarship and in making unfounded accusations. The "short and ugly little monosyllable" is not generally imputed on hearsay evidence, and it is well for all of us to recall the proverb as to giving a dog a bad name. Coventry Patmore's bitter lines should help us to realize our responsibilities:

After its work is done the lie will rot:
Mighty is truth, and shall prevail
When none cares whether it prevail or not.

EMILY E. F. SKEEL.

Rome.

Dethroning Idols

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

We were unfortunate on this blue Monday in having our morning's coffee chilled by reading an outline of Rupert Hughes's latest biography on that most estimable gentleman, George Washington.

The facility with which this writer seeks to discredit Washington is astounding. Documentary evidence perhaps is back of his asseverations, but why assail one of America's greatest men to ease his mind of malodorous vindictiveness. Possibly Washington did drink, flirt, and seek to enjoy himself. Who doesn't? But when he was called upon to play a 50-1 shot. (I'll bet Lloyds would have classed the Revolution so), he rose to superhuman heights in personal endeavor and inculcated perseverance and determination in a wavering army of farmer boys.

We (that's the writer) are still young enough to look with idealistic adoration on the stately form and superb dignity of Washington as he is depicted in oil and ink. But we are also old enough to be tolerant of human frailities and to blink at infrequent indiscretions when we realize the loftier pursuits which the same nature pursued in times of duress.

However, it frequently happens that our visceral activities get so sluggish that we assume a sour and doleful outlook on the world, our friends and ourselves. When the deepest depths are finally plumbed we steal silently out into the night and return from the corner drugstore with those irresistable little fixers, Messrs. Calomel and Pluto. Heigh-ho the world becomes our oyster, our friends are truest and best and not for all this world's gelt would we strike down our meanest foe!

While the little fixers above referred to are usually taken neat or with water, would it not be of untold value to the literary world if the Rockefeller Foundation could discover a suitable method for injecting them into the cranial cavity of acrimonious writers?

Because, dear editor, we think Mr. Hughes is suffering quite severely with uric acid in his think tank.

RUSSELL C. PARSON.

Springfield, Mass.

The Compleat Collector.

RARE BOOKS · FIRST EDITIONS · FINE TYPOGRAPHY

By Carl Purington Rollins & George Parker Winship.

"Now cheaply bought for thrice their weight in gold."

WHATEVER its ultimate destination may be, the Vollbehr collection of Fifteenth century books has already taken a place in American bookish annals, through the generous way in which the owner has placed his treasures on exhibition in a number of cities East and West. The fact that many of the volumes were unfamiliar to students in this country was reason enough for gratitude for the opportunity to see them, but it is gratifying to learn that an authority from the very nesting place of incunabula found material in this collection for a twenty-eight page essay on "Inkunabelsammlungen und ihr Wissenschaftlicher Wirt." The author is Dr. Ernst Schulz of Munich, and it is privately printed at the University Press of that place.

One of Dr. Vollbehr's books about which there has been a certain amount of speculation, due largely to the confusing way in which the reports of its purchase got into circulation, is the copy of the Gutenberg Bible bought by him in Austria a year ago. What can be accepted as an authoritative account of this matchless possession has now arrived from Vienna, in a pamphlet entitled "Die Gutenberg-Bibel der Sammlung Vollbehr. Schicksale des kostbarsten Buches." It has been compiled by Herbert Reichner, of the Bibliotheca Typographica, who quotes the comments of successive travelers and bibliographers who have seen this copy of the first printed book, during the past hundred and fifty years. Dr. Reichner states the cost of the volume, after meeting official fees and government assessments, as 1,300,000 marks or about $305,000, a substantial increase over previous newspaper reports.

The Catholic University of America offers the people of Washington an opportunity to see some 200 of the rarest volumes in the Oliveira Lima collection. It is a skimming of the cream from a library of 40,000 volumes, and its richness may be judged from a printed bibliographical and historical description compiled by Ruth E. V. Holmes, the assistant librarian of the Ibero-American library.

The Rare Book Field is a recreational park which, although long known to a few, has only recently been brought within the reach of large numbers of eager visitors. As always happens under such circumstances, the entrance is forthwith beset with guides anxious to offer their services to show the way to all the hidden nooks and crannies. These guides likewise are all alike in their claims of omniscience, in the badges they sport, and the fees they charge, but there is a wide range in their acquaintance with the ground they profess to cover.

In the forefront of the group of guides to bookdom who have set themselves up this autumn, Douglas McMurtrie has planted his Golden Book, prepared to defend his claim to this position with elaborate bulwarks supported by his wide familiarity with the literature of the subject, in all the European languages. William Dana Orcutt keeps him close company with a second volume of autobiographical essays, based on thirty years of confident voyaging. Cyril Davenport, somewhat haltingly, to be sure, takes his stand on a well-earned reputation and much frequenting of the byways where choice bindings blossom. Morris H. Briggs offers to look after any business details incidental to the novel conditions. Meantime, back in the shadows and maybe a little envious of all the glitter and tinsel of facsimile illustrations, the best guide of the lot is watching the rivals gather most of the glory. This is John T. Winterich's "Primer of Book Collecting," an unpretentious volume, thoroughly sound on essentials.

Charles J. Sawyer and F. J. Harvey Darton present their two volumes on "English Books, 1475-1900" as "A Signpost for Collectors." It would serve this purpose most admirably, if only each copy could have its own signposts, telling when the signs point to blind alleys, and when the data is out of date. The work is, in intent, a glorification of Seymour DeRicci's "Book Collector's Guide." The difficulty with both is that they pay undue attention to the picturesque rarities, the books that have sold for phenomenal prices, but which are not of especial interest to oncoming collectors, because these particular treasures will never be sold again. Signposts pointing to the unattainable are not particularly helpful. Sawyer and Darton avoid another fault of the earlier handbook, by explaining carefully that the titles they select for comment, and the prices they quote, are intended merely as suggestive of what may be expected of other similar titles.

Messrs. Sawyer and Darton have succeeded in producing a manual that is readable as well as informing. They themselves warn their readers of the chief pitfall in their pages, but this might have been made even clearer. It results from the fact that their writing had to be done in the intervals of an active business, over a considerable period. Those who wish, can secure a good deal of entertainment, as well as information, by trying to date the successive passages. The prices that are quoted ordinarily make this easy, and it is occasionally possible to show where a passage written at one date, has been amended later. The results may be confusing. On one page is a long paragraph telling the story of how Horace Walpole printed six copies only of his famous Strawberry Hill Press keepsakes, while on the other side of the same leaf is a note praising the publication which revealed the fact that the "6" should have been "60," the praise being phrased in a way that makes it quite certain that the writer of it had not read the publication in question.

Dr. Rosenbach's "Books and Bidders" is autobiographical, but any other form of presentation would not have been fair to his friends who have bought books from him, or to the public. It is really the third of a series of very notable volumes, which embody the story of the past half dozen decades of book collecting in America. William Harris Arnold personified later nineteenth century collecting, and the account of his Ventures comes near to being the best of American bookish books. Mr. Newton took up the tale in his "Amenities," for the early decades of this century, and now Dr. Rosenbach in even better style brings it down to date. It is an appropriate moment, for the death of Mr. Henry E. Huntington marks the end of an epoch.

Praise of Dr. Rosenbach's volume is superfluous, for the book is like the man, who has taken into his business career the highest standards of the scholarly life in which he started. He might have had a distinguished academic career, but on the whole, it is possible that learning has been immeasurably the gainer because of the influence he has wielded through his domination of the market, and his control of the distribution of many of the irreplaceable keystones of history and literature.

Roland B. McKerrow's "Introduction to Bibliography" does not belong with the books mentioned above, as its author takes care to make quite plain. But it must be mentioned, if only because it comes to hand along with the others, and because it is more important than all the others together. The rest tell how to enjoy the possession of books; McKerrow shows how to know them. The others must be read by those who wish to keep up with the bookish times. Mr. McKerrow has done something much more fundamental, for he lays down the solid foundation upon which all bookish knowledge for the immediate future will be built. This is strong praise, but any one who questions it, is recommended to look into the book.

G. P. W.

A welcome relief from catalogues of books by literary folk, is a list from Wheldon and Wesley of London, of recent purchases of old books on Zoology, Botany, the Physical and Mathematical Sciences and, as the only point of contact with their offerings from other shops, Sport.

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The Compleat Collector

(*Continued from preceding page*)

THE Grolier Club met on the evening of December 15, to celebrate the publication of an important book—the "Champfleury" of Geofroy Tory, first printed in Paris in 1529 by Tory and de Gourmont, and now first translated into English by George B. Ives, and printed in fitting style by Bruce Rogers.

There were three speakers for the evening: Professor Theodore Sizer, Associate Professor of the History of Art in Yale University, talked on the contemporary conditions in art and politics at the time when Tory was flourishing, of his birth in medieval Bruges, and his life in renaissant Paris; William L. Ivins, Jr., Curator of Prints at the Metropolitan Museum, called Tory largely a myth, so far as our exact knowledge of his life and actual work are concerned, and so, while contributing to the general information about Tory, kept the whole consideration safely within the bounds of reason; and Henry W. Kent, Secretary of the Metropolitan Museum, spoke of Tory as the formulator of elegance in bookmaking, and called attention to the numerous valuable publications of the Grolier Club in the field of typography.

There is on exhibition at the Grolier Club, 47 East Sixtieth Street, in connection with the publication of the new book, a very much worth while exhibition of books and illustrations relating to Tory. There are books which were the popular successes of his youth, books which he knew in Paris and in his travels in Italy, works in literature as well as the several treatises on lettering which fired him to write the "Champfleury." There are scarce and attractively printed editions of Rabelais, Montaigne, Ronsard, etc., of the time when he was working. And there are Grolier *bindings. Then come the* "Champfleury" exhibits—first, six copies of the Tory edition, then, in proof sheets, drawings and sample pages, the present Grolier Club edition. Next are numerous specimens of the work of contemporary Paris and Lyons printers—the Estiennes, Colines, Kerver, de Tournes, Dolet, and others—showing what renaissance French printing was and why it was so handsome. Finally there are books showing the influence of Tory and his contemporaries on modern work, and several effective enlargements of his alphabets. The exhibition has been arranged with great care, the labels are adequate and open to only the usual differences of opinion as to veracity, and as a whole should be seen by all who would get a conspectus of the great era of French typography.

Of the work of Mr. Rogers and Mr. Ives, there is this to be said at the outset: if it were well to have an edition of Tory's one outstanding work in English, the program could hardly have been entrusted to worthier hands. The project was first considered by the club as far back, we believe, as 1909, and the first pages were set by Mr. Rogers in 1916. The work was interrupted by the war, by the usual difficulties of monumental work, by difficulties in translation. The driving force in the earlier years was Mr. Kent, and he has reason to be proud of the result.

The plan of the "Champfleury," as explained by Tory, was an attempt to "establish and ordain the French language by fixed rule," to explain the invention of antique letters, with their proportions in relation to the body and face of the perfect man, and to draw, in their alphabetical order, all the said antique letters. This is in brief what Tory set out to do. He was, as Mr. Ivins pointed out, a pedantic pedant, if ever there was one, and his book is hard reading. But the effective drawing of the roman alphabet (to which he adds forms of various other alphabets) is nearly a work of perfection, however curious may be his coincidents of the human body.

The book has been set by Mr. Rogers in his "Centaur" type, so harmonious in feeling with Tory's time and work—a type called "of its kind the best anywhere." It will dumbfound the carping to find mixed in the same book, and, because done by a great artist, successfully mixed, "Centaur" and "Garamond" and "Garamond Italic" and "Italian Old Style"—and there may well be other faces fused into the lovely whole which we did not discover! It was a difficult handful of types to use together in such a book, and we doubt if anyone but Mr. Rogers could so successfully have done it. The harmony gets a little shaky between the "Centaur" on the title-page and the "Garamond" on the opening text pages —shaky, but not quite discord.

The original illustrations of Tory's book have been skilfully redrawn by Mr. Rogers, and are probably as good if not better than the originals, owing to more careful presswork. The plates are really very fine indeed, and the crisp blackness of the solids is extremely satisfactory. The paper is good in surface, color, and weight, and the book well displays that success of proportions which come not alone from experience but from that certain *flair* for bookmaking possessed by Mr. Rogers and not many others. The printing of the volume, a long and arduous task, has been very satisfactorily done by William Edwin Rudge at Mount Vernon. Three hundred and ninety copies have been printed on machine-made paper, and seven large paper copies on hand-made paper. The book will not be issued until January, when we hope to have a somewhat fuller consideration of it in particulars here treated briefly. Its appearance is the most important event in fine book printing for some years.

A Valuable Edition

LE MORTE DARTHUR. By SIR THOMAS MALORY. With illustrations by AUBREY BEARDSLEY, and introductory material by AYMER VALLANCE, R. A. WALKER, and JOHN RHYS. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1927. $15.

THE first Dent edition of "Le Morte Darthur" in 1893 was also the first work of Aubrey Beardsley's of any consequence. Dent had commissioned the young, erratic, and impecunious genius to make an indefinite number of drawings for the book, and the arrangement, entered into with enthusiasm on both sides was destined to be carried out with travail on both. The first edition appeared serially, but did not contain all of the pictures which the artist made: the second edition was unwittingly supplied with various drawings omitted from the first: this, the third, of which 1600 copies have been printed, contains all of the pictures made by Beardsley for the work.

The chief value of this present printing seems, therefore to be two-fold. Besides the inclusion of all of Beardsley's drawings, and the better reproduction of the Merlin picture, the critical paraphernalia is of much interest and invaluable in connection with the artist's work. Mr. Aymer Vallance has written an introduction which takes up in much detail and explicitness the history of the relations between Dent and Beardsley, and comments freely upon the distaste which Beardsley felt for the task after he had once embarked upon it. As Mr. Vallance points out, Beardsley was no man to labor patiently at so Herculean a job, and not only did he have to be prodded by the publisher, but he "cut corners" in executing the final drawings in amusing but exasperating fashion.

The present edition reprints Professor Rhy's Introduction, as well as the usual preface, introduction, etc., from Caxton's edition of 1485. The latter has been used as a basis for the text, with considerable editing as to spelling, etc., as fully set forth in a note on the text used by Mr. F. J. Simmons. With all this exegesis, the present edition becomes a definitive one so far as Beardsley and Malory are concerned, and invaluable to a student of the artist who made so profound an impression on the graphic arts of the nineties.

It is of course well-nigh impossible to make a homogeneous book of Beardsley's drawings and letter-press. Type which would harmonize with his masses of black would drown a page. Hence one must feel *dissatisfied with the combination of Caslon* type and enormous spots of ink. But we admit that the task as set is an impossible one, unless, indeed, one would outrage Beardsley by printing the pictures frankly in lower tones, and thereby, perhaps, achieving a fairly harmonious book-page. And, since the pictures were drawn for book illustrations, it might be worth the trial. Several reproductions in photogravure add to the confusion, but help the drawings. And there the matter rests—it is a collection of most extraordinarily vigorous drawings by Aubrey Beardsley, a tribute to a great master of black and white.

C. R.

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Reprimanding the entire human race is one of the most popular pastimes of our time, but *The Inner Sanctum*, much as it admires H. G. WELLS, OSWALD SPENGLER, COUNT HERMAN KEYSERLING, and BERTRAND RUSSELL, is in no mood to support such castigations.

The plain fact of the matter is that *The Inner Sanctum* is at the moment suffused with an affectionate, glowing regard for most of mankind. If this be premeditated and shameless optimism, the defendants throw themselves upon the mercy of the court and plead extenuating circumstances:

As we wrote to a seventy-three-year-old friend of ours down in Johannesburg: with *The Story of Philosophy* about to enter its *third* hundred thousand, with *Trader Horn* swinging full speed into its *second* hundred thousand, with the reading public clamoring for *The Complete Works of Plato, The Complete Works of Schopenhauer* and a reprinting of WILL DURANT'S Ph.D. thesis, *Philosophy and the Social Problem* . . . with such things happening all about us, verily *homo stultus* has become *homo sapiens*, and only men of mud can refuse to cheer.

The eleventh hour pre-holiday best-seller bulletins from The Baker and Taylor Company, covering the entire country, show *Adam and Eve* by JOHN ERSKINE heading the fiction list and *Trader Horn* leading in general literature.

With the exception of *Adam and Eve*, moreover, *Trader Horn* is the best-selling book in America, fiction or non-fiction. ALFRED ALOYSIUS is almost the head man in that show.

The Inner Sanctum didn't quite make its super-quota on *Trader Horn* for the last fortnight. Since your correspondent couldn't count the telegrams and air-mail orders which deluged *The Inner Sanctum* Saturday night and Sunday, the fourteen-day total was only 23,523 copies.

Usurping the prerogatives of MERRYLE STANLEY RUKEYSER, our investment counsel, for the nonce, we advise all the speculative friends of *The Inner Sanctum* to plunge on Western Union Common. All the booksellers are in telegraphic eruption pleading for more copies of *The Story of Philosophy* and *Trader Horn*, and the rush is so furious that we are compelled to give out reports of unfilled tonnage.

The clang of hook and ladders at 57th Street and Fifth Avenue yesterday was due to the spontaneous combustion of a pile of reviews and advertisements on WILL DURANT'S books announcing that they had again set H. L. MENCKEN'S hair on fire.

—ESSANDESS

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THE PHOENIX NEST

WE have received a long clipping from The Irish World and American Industrial Liberator. "*Dionysius*," as he signs himself, who wrote it, begins by saying that *Sean O'Casey* has fouled his own nest and that he, "Dionysius," has no desire to see "The Plough and the Stars." He says he has read the play and it is no good. He suspected as much beforehand because the play was praised in the "so-called" *Irish Statesman*. He goes on to talk about the Abbey Theatre.

The presiding genius of this Irish or Abbey Theatre is the conceited *William Butler Yeats*, the minor poet, who on the opening night of O'Casey's play, gave expression to his insane delight that the play had "cut the Irish people to the quick."

O'Casey, according to "Dionysius," "is merely one of the smaller figures in the limbo of Irish renegades, who have received rewards from the enemies of Ireland for their service against their motherland." All of which is, of course, nonsense, but not particularly amusing. We don't know who "Dionysius" may be, but he quite evidently rejoices in the fact that he knows nothing about literature. We knew the reason for Yeats's writing his great poem concerning Juan of the sinewy thigh, but we didn't know that O'Casey was now regarded as *Synge* was once regarded. We have a mellow memory of *Padraic Colum* reading some of O'Casey once before his household fire to a group of those who were certainly no enemies of Ireland. As for Yeats being a "minor poet," he is perhaps the greatest Irish poet in a century. But that can be known, of course, only by those who know what great literature is. . . .

Marjorie Rogers, of Cleveland, Ohio, sends us the following Christmas Carol:

GRADUATE STUDENT'S PROTEST

This tracing of sources for poets who sing
Is surely a most disillusioning thing,
For no one has had an idea of his own
Since our forefathers fashioned their tools out of stone.
There's hardly a statement in Shakespeare or Bacon
That from some old Italian or Greek was not taken.
And no one has ever invented a plot
That's not found in some folk-tale or myth or what not.
But when Wordsworth shows Shelley new lands and new oceans,
Who gave to the first, pantheistical notions?
Although some immediate sources we know,
We can't rest content, but still further must go.
Though one writer's thoughts are so nicely dissected,
There is much further back that is still undetected.
Such lore as we have is quite thrilling, of course,
But what of the source of the source of the source?
Now for scholars whose searches make weary their days,
May I humbly suggest a short cut through the maze—
Since no subsequent creature has possibly had 'em,
Why not credit all thoughts and opinions to Adam?

Allan Westcott, Professor of English at the U. S. Naval Academy sends us the following interesting elucidation of another matter:

My dear Phœnician,

You have sailed the Seven Seas no doubt, in fact and fancy, but do you know what they are? Don't look in the *Kipling Dictionary*, for that says nothing about it, or in the *New Oxford Dictionary*, for that learned authority shows neither accuracy nor imagination on the subject, naming the usual five oceans and then boldly splitting the Atlantic and Pacific in two to get seven.

Now the *seven seas* are no such thing, and the idea, as one might readily suspect, is much older. Seven in all myth and religion has been a mystic number—the Seven Wonders of the World, Seven Stars, Seven Days of the Week and of the Creation, Seven Years' War, etc., etc. In Brahmin mythology it is a special favorite, and here one finds seven kinds of food, seven jewels of the law, seven sleepers, seven highest names of the sacred cow. The earth, we are told, is the lowest of seven spheres, with a series of hells still lower down. And all these are encompassed above by the shell of the egg of Brahma, beyond which again are envelopes of water, fire, air, ether, mind, and finally (seventh) the infinite Pradhana, or cause of all existing things. The earth itself consists of seven land masses, which are divided and surrounded by *seven seas*.

Here, of course, Mr. Kipling found the phrase which he has put into universal usage. Going back to the medieval Arabian geographers, one can find all sorts of information about the seven seas. Thus, to quote one of many sources, Kakut Al Rumi, a writer of the thirteenth century, describes a voyage from Arabia to the Far East as follows:

"If it is desired to reach China by water it is necessary to cross seven seas. Each one has its particular color, its fish, and its winds, which are not found in the next sea. The first is the Sea of Fars [Persian Gulf], on which one embarks at Shiraz and which ends at the Cape Ras Al-hadd, southeast of Oman; this sea is narrow and contains pearl fisheries. The second sea is called the Sea of Larwi; it is a great sea, containing the islands of the Walwak and other peoples of the Zandis. In these islands there are kings. This sea can be navigated only by the help of the stars. It contains great fish and many marvellous things. The third sea is called the Sea of Harkand [Bay of Bengal], where is the island of Sirandib [Ceylon] with many precious stones. In this sea there are also many islands, and on the islands, kings; one of these is the head of all the others. The fourth sea is called Kalah bar [along the Malay Peninsula]. It is very shallow and contains many snakes. Often the wind blows in such hurricanes that ships are broken in two. It has islands on which grows the camphor tree. The fifth sea is called Salahat. It is a great sea with many marvelous things. The sixth sea is called Kundrang [Gulf of Siam]; here it constantly rains. The seventh sea is called Kankhay. This is the China Sea, which one can traverse only with southerly winds, coming finally to the estuary of a great river."

Doesn't this make the voyage sound attractive? I haven't written to Mr. Kipling about the matter, but I have no doubt he'd bear out this explanation.

We wish to thank "A Voice in the Wilderness" for a kind letter, and a lady of Beaufort, South Carolina, for copying out for us a French song of long ago. She thinks she first found this song in Paris. It is resurrected from on old scrap-book, and she is not sure that the author's name is correctly given. We shall print the words later.

To *Percy MacKaye*, the author of "Epoch," *Gordon Craig* wrote of *Steele MacKaye*: "Your father—his love of our theatre—not deserting the guns, as so many do—keeping the poor out-of-date things polished up, for the love of—*Death*—isn't it?—Something damned near it, anyhow! This spirit—your father's—is the best in the American theatre."

On February 25, 1894, Steele MacKaye died. His funeral was held, at Chicago, in the theatre of his dreams and inventions, the Scenitorium—a miniature of his vaster Spectatorium. There *Henry Irving* sent, with a wreath of tribute, these words—from a fellow "player"—*Hamlet's* "Good night, sweet Prince!" There, to a great concourse, representing the dramatic and literary professions, *Elwyn A. Barron*, the distinguished dramatic critic, said:

They who succeed are they who give the world a new idea, a new force, a new aspiration, a new joy, that means in any great way the betterment of man. Somewhere, within the roll of servants of mankind, this resting toiler's name is written enduringly. Steele MacKaye's pen was in the service of the higher uses of man's nature. His plays were permeated with the love of truth and the dignity of manhood. His characters were of the kind that stood for heroes in their class. . . . More than two years ago, in a London hotel, I heard a great reasonant voice ring out its emphasis of health and power. . . . It was Steele Mackaye. He sat leonine in the midst of an attentive, entertained, but incredulous group—his strong face aglow, his powerful frame vibrating with the fine passion that animated him. He was talking of the revolution of stage mechanics, the glorification of dramatic art, through the medium of plans he had perfected. All his listeners were entranced by the marvelous eloquence of the man, but most of them smiled and whispered to one another: 'What a splendid visionary!' . . . . But a few nights ago, a gaunt, emaciated man, powerless to stand without support, the eyes having something of their old fire, the voice something of its old, courageous ring, sat here, and—in word, in painting, in music, in a miracle of lights and shadows—opened the doors upon a new world of electrical wonders applied to the service of an art, master of them all, and—with an open grave among the spectres that he saw—smiled out the triumph of a lifetime. . . There were cheers and bravoes and loud applause in this house, that night, for this one lying here—dead, but a victor, and the echoes of those plaudits shall still be heard when the last one of us has vanished from the scene.

Happily, though more than three and thirty years have passed since then, Elwyn A. Barron yet holds the scene, still master of the eloquent style with which he stirred an earlier generation. Now in retirement, at his home in Kansas City, he has been moved to write a review of Steele MacKaye's biography, dispatching it east to his friend and fellow-"Player," *Oliver Herford*, who has done us the courtesy of prefacing it with words which appear on page 467 of this issue of the *Saturday Review*. . . .

THE PHŒNICIAN.

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